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The battle of hand-held consoles

## Nintendo, Sega, Atari and NEC fight it out

By Zeld Nasser  
Special to The Star

GOING ON a trip down memory lane to the early Eighties should remind you of awkward little gadgets with names like "game & watch", which students would play under their desks during classes. These toys were a hit in their time, but were limited to one game per set, which allowed game systems like the Atari VCS with cartridge storage.

to wipe them off the face of the Earth. Years later, Nintendo was the first to put two and two together and realize that breathing life back into hand-held games is possible if they were to accept cartridges, and that marked the birth of the Nintendo GameBoy, measuring less than 20 centimeters in length and incorporating monochrome graphics and sheer gameplay in the first titles to appear such as the unbelievably addictive "Tetris". And if you don't want to bother others by the bleeps and bangs coming out of your machine, plug in your earphones and ignore everybody's comments.

The big four battling it out in the shops nowadays are the Nintendo GameBoy, the first and most popular entrant into the race; the Atari Lynx released back in 1989 and the Sega Game Gear which is absolutely the most impressive of the bunch. Other manufacturers are making their appearance felt in the market like NEC, with their high specification Turbo Grafx hand-held, which is not receiving as much support from software or hardware developers and which is lagging behind the other three.

The Atari Lynx boasts 16MHz, 4096 color gaming with custom graphics capabilities and is actually a 16-bit machine! These stunning specifications squeezed into a pocket size box would oth-

erwise occupy full desk space with an ultimate games computer like the Commodore Amiga. Support for the Lynx is good, but not as much as the GameBoy. Another drawback is the high prices of cartridges reaching something like £30, which actually represents around one third of the £100 asking price for the Lynx system itself.

As for the Game Gear, it's an 8-bit color machine with the weight of the games giant Sega behind it. Priced at £100 like the Lynx, it's in a rather weak position. It doesn't look very stylish, but it's better than the GameBoy in both graphics and sound quality and has a whole audience of its own in Europe and Japan.

The GameBoy is taking on the image of hand-held gaming for the masses due to its lower price, £70, and because its games also cost less. Another thing is Nintendo's aggressive campaign to promote it and the fact that it's been better received by third party manufacturers, providing your GameBoy with everything from screen magnifiers, screen lighters, solar energy packs to protective holders and small carrying cases. In fact, an interesting add-on called the "Wide-Boy" will enable you to connect your GameBoy to a TV or monitor removing

the only boundary between hand-helds and game consoles like the Nintendo Family Entertainment System!

New devices allowing Gear and Lynx owners to exchange cartridges should fuel the battle even more. Let's face it, with

technology so advanced, it's ridiculous to engage in the "my hand-held-is-better-than-yours" kind of arguments since the line between these machines is becoming thinner everyday.

Hand-helds are ideally suited to players who are on the move. In Europe so many employees go to work on trains and buses and enjoy traditional means of entertainment every morning and evening like reading a newspaper or listening to a walkman. But it is also common to see quite a few people clutching a GameBoy and enjoying a game of Tetris. You can't ignore the cultural effect of portable games-machines.

Anybody with doubts about the games and entertainment industry had better give these little wonder machines a look to realise the new grounds personal entertainment is breaking. So the battle rages on with the Lynx arising as the winner in Christmas sales in Britain last year, but with the GameBoy being the best international seller so far.

So it's only natural to wonder if these machines are anywhere to be seen in Jordan. There still aren't any dealers stocking these machines but I have spotted several people playing their GameBoys in universities, schools and clubs. Our PC dominated computer market doesn't exactly make way for these gadgets, but with an increasing crowd of game players in Jordan I suppose we'll catch up with the hand-held revolution someday. In the meantime, I think I'll go back for another try at "Tennis" and probably kill my GameBoy batteries in the process.

### INTERFACE

BY ZELD NASSER

## GITEX steals the show from the Amman Computer Expo '92

IT'S ABOUT time now for a look at the Amman Computer Expo in retrospect, to take a peek behind the scenes and reflect on the Jordan Computer Society's (JCS) daily visitor count of three thousand visitors. It is an interesting number if you remember how empty the show hall looked during the days of the expo. Is it because the space was doubled this year to 2000

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square meters, that it seemed to us that the number of visitors was less? Last year, the average daily turn-up of visitors was around four thousand a day. So this year's numbers are obviously less.

In all fairness, the expo was very well organized and the show hall was attractively and neatly arranged, but being so far away from Amman what kind of turnout would you expect? The remoteness of the Marj Al Hammam venue was a major reason for the poor attendance, people just didn't bother to take the long trip, whereas last year's site was ideally located in the vicinity of the University of Jordan, creating a stampede of university (and college) students.

Take the GITEX Information Technology Exhibition starting in Dubai today, as an example. This show is considered to be the main annual event in the region and has always been a launching pad for many important products. In keeping with this tradition, 11 worldwide product launches and 25 Middle Eastern product launches are expected including Microsoft's long awaited Arabic Windows 3.1 and Arabic Excel 4.0, Citizen printers for the Macintosh PowerBook, the new Compaq range of PCs and a variety of software and hardware. This is understandable since the Gulf countries make up the biggest computer market in the region and the world "GITEX" spells big publicity and serious contracts for world manufacturers.

The Amman Computer Expo gave participants good exposure and promoted their products, but a sentiment shared by many I talked to went something like: "to us it's all the same, since we know who our customers are and appearing in this show strengthens our image in the minds of these customers." It must be said that this is true to some extent since many agree that the Amman Computer Expo is nothing more than a get-together event for companies active in the Jordanian computer sector. Another thing is that GITEX, although based in Dubai and dominated by UAE companies, attracts Saudi, Egyptian and even Indian companies.

So has the Amman Expo served its purpose and satisfied its participants? Some complained of a clear bias by the organizing committee towards some companies by giving them the best spaces. A convincing explanation offered by the JCS was that this is normal since most of the companies who got the best places have delegates sitting on the board of the JCS who are the first to know about the expo and, consequently, the first to reserve spaces.

Many talked of the effect the expo's location had on the number of visitors saying that it wasn't worth reserving space and setting up a stand in the first place. "At first, we thought that the location would mean that we would have elite visitors who were really interested in computers enough to travel the distance, but if this is the number of computer educated visitors, we'd rather go back to having any kind of visitors."

It has to be said, though, in defence of the JCS, that there aren't many decent exhibition halls to choose from, "they're either too small or too far away" complained a visitor as he explained why the JCS were not really to blame.

It should be pointed out here that the idea is not to criticize the JCS or Jordanian companies or anybody else involved. I wouldn't like some one to send me an explosive envelope after reading this column. My concern is to highlight the positioning of the Jordanian market properly. If international companies like IBM set up regional offices in Amman and if giants like Microsoft start thinking about opening a regional office here, as they have previously in Dubai, then our market should start living up to its potential as a true "launching pad" for products into countries like Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.

In the meantime, I suggest that computer enthusiasts, like myself, continue to follow the exciting news of the GITEX show bearing in mind that major announcements and product launches that will undoubtedly affect our Jordanian market are taking place far away in Dubai.

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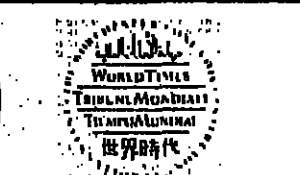
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# JORDAN WEEK

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views

■ Suddenly it was all over. Two days after the State Security Court sentenced two Lower House deputies to 20 years hard labor for sedition, His Majesty the King stepped in and announced a general amnesty. On Sunday, most of those affected by the Royal Pardon, including deputies Laith Shbeilat and Yacoub Qarashi, were free men.

The King's move ended the controversy that shrouded the trial of the two Islamist parliamentarians. Observers hailed the decision and deputies said it came at an opportune time in Jordan's democratic life. Representatives from most blocs including the Muslim Brothers also commended the Royal Pardon.

Tuesday's sentence against the deputies was sent to the prime minister for endorsement, but with the King's letter to Prime Minister Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker announcing the amnesty, the cabinet did not hesitate to approve a temporary general amnesty law, which will have to be presented to Parliament when it convenes on 1 December.

Since the Prime Minister did not endorse the sentence, the two deputies will continue to serve as



Deputy Shbeilat leaving prison on Sunday

deputies and their records will not be affected by the trial and the verdicts against them.

The pardon affects about 1000 people, including those convicted by martial courts and State Security Courts. Among those who were freed were members of the Abu Nidal Group, Mohammad Army and three men convicted in the murder of Fahd Al Qawasme, reported Radio Monte Carlo on Tuesday.

Mr Shbeilat told reporters on Sunday as he left prison that he was grateful to the King who dis-

played keenness in establishing justice.

Deputy Qarashi also thanked the King as he left the prison. Relatives of detainees danced and sang in celebration in front of Jweidat rehabilitation center. The amnesty coincided with the King's birthday, which was marked on Saturday.

The King will officially open the last ordinary session of the current Parliament on 1 December and will deliver a speech from the Throne. General elections will be held next August.

## FOR THE RECORD

By Ahmad Shaker

■ Jordanian-US contacts may succeed soon in ending the naval blockade of Aqaba, The Star has learned. Jordan has made a strong case about its strict adherence to UN imposed sanctions against Iraq. If the blockade is lifted, shipping agents say Aqaba port may recoup from its sluggish performance, lowering the cost of freight and putting the harbor back on international shipping sea routes.

■ Banking sources have said that the volume of remittances has increased during the last three months reaching an average of \$1.5 million daily up from an average of \$750,000 daily last year.

■ The General Statistics Dept. will conduct a national census in 1993. The last official census was conducted 15 years ago.

■ The Ministry of Agriculture has asked the Prime Ministry to cancel the Agricultural Produce Marketing Company's monopoly on apple and potato imports and leave such imports to the private sector.

■ A report by the Housing Corp. has concluded that the Kingdom's annual need of housing units is estimated at 24,500. It said the number of housing units throughout the Kingdom last year was 580,000 units.

■ The government has rejected requests by a number of local companies like cement, cigarettes and oil to raise their prices.

■ Former Lebanese prime minister Dr Salim Al Hos will visit Amman in December at the invitation of the Jordanian Popular Committee for the Support of the Intifada and Abdel Hamid Shoman Foundation. Dr Al Hos will be guest of honor at a special dinner on 19 December where he will deliver a lecture on the democratic experiment in Lebanon.

■ About 35 delegates from Jordan and Arab countries will meet in Amman for a three-day regional seminar on tariff and accounting of telecommunications services between 23-26 November. The seminar, to be held at the Amman Marriott Hotel, is jointly organized by the delegation of the Commission of the European Community and the French Embassy in Amman. It will tackle various problems faced by national telecommunications companies in the Arab world.

■ As US president-elect Bill Clinton prepares to take over the White House, close aides have been talking about the appointment of a high-level envoy to the Middle East. Two names are tipped, former Secretary of State under Bush Mr James Baker, a

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US\$	688.0	690.0
£	1049.5	1054.7
DM	429.6	431.7
SFR	478.1	480.5
FRF	127.1	127.7
YEN	555.2	558.0
(100)		
DFL	382.4	384.3
SKR	112.6	113.2
LIT	50.2	50.5
(100)		
BLF	208.9	209.9
(10)		

### Gold & Silver

	Jds
Gold	
1kg	7,500
21ct	6,550
18ct	5,600
Eng. Pound	
8g	8,100
Rashad:	
8g	47,000
24ct (swiss)	54.00
Silver (1kg)	140.00

### Deposit Rates

Euro-deposit rates:					
	US	DEM	STG	Yen	SFR
1 mo.	3.1/16	8.15/16	7.3/8	3.15/16	6.5/8
2 mo.	3.11/16	8.15/16	7.1/4	3.15/16	6.3/8
3 mo.	3.11/16	8.15/16	6.7/8	3.13/16	6.5/8
6 mo.	3.13/16	8.1/2	6.5/8	3.11/16	6.1/4
1 year	4.00	7.3/8	6.7/8	3.5/8	6.1/8
Interbank rates (Jordan):					
Savings accounts 6%, Call accounts 5.75%, 1 week 6%, 1 month 7.25%, 2 months 7.50%, 3 months 7.75%, 1 year 8.00%, Lending rate (AAA) 13.50%.					
Dollar:					
DMK	SFR	STG	YEN	CAN	FRF
1.85550	1.42335	1.53016	123.450	1.25904	6.36155

Source: Amman Bank for Investment, Tel: 642701

## Clinton's stance on Mideast will be balanced, says former Washington diplomat

By Kate Daniels  
Star Staff Writer

A VISITING American political consultant has claimed that US President-elect Bill Clinton will seek "a very balanced approach" to the Arab-Israeli question, refuting Arab fears of a pro-Israeli tilt within the Clinton administration.

"I believe the peace process will continue and that both positions will be taken into account," said writer and lecturer Ambassador Christopher Van Hollen, a Middle East specialist and former editor of the *Middle East Journal*.

As part of a lecture tour in the region, Dr Van Hollen offered his own personal insight into the future direction of US foreign policy under the new American president. Lecturing at the University of Jordan's Center for Strategic Studies, Dr Van Hollen appeared as a guest of the US Speakers' Program, sponsored by the US Information Agency.

Referring to the post-victory speech given by President-elect Clinton on 12 November, Dr Van Hollen made mention of the immediate US foreign policy priorities: A multi-year defense budget plan, reduction of nuclear weapons, a commitment to global growth and economic regeneration, promotion of democracy and human rights and continuation of the Middle East peace process.

"Since 3 November Mr Clinton has twice affirmed his support for the Middle East peace process, and has said that talks will move ahead with his inauguration in January," said Dr Van Hollen. He described Mr Clinton as aiming "to work towards a resolution of the (Arab-Israeli) conflict in a way that serves peace in the region."

Dr Van Hollen also insisted that under a Clinton administration there will be no changes within the established operations of the peace process, and that it will continue in accordance with the initiatives set by President George Bush.

"By next January the peace process will be in its fifteenth month," said Dr Van Hollen. "I think that under Clinton there will be a continuation of the peace process in its present form with regards to both the bilateral and multilateral talks."

Dr Van Hollen gave emphasis to the significant role that the US has played in the peace process so far, and the Middle East as a whole. "Solutions to issues of conflict in the Middle East over the last 25 years have been brought about by US involvement," he said, "therefore a continued US role is important."

He added, however, that the prevalent line of thought in the US is that it should not continue to be an exclusive broker to the peace process, but that help could be realized from other countries, such as France or Egypt.

A good example is the role being played by Egypt at the moment, he said, adding that this week's talks between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.



Clinton: Calming Arab fears

"It seems to me that the Egyptians can play an important intermediary role between the Arabs and the Israelis, as the only Arab country with both diplomatic ties with Israel and good relations with the P.L.O.," he added.

Expressing his confidence in the peace process, Dr Van Hollen believes that continued concern for its progress will eventually lead to success between Israel and the four fronts of Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. "I am not suggesting that this will be quick and easy," he said, "but I think progress has already been made between Jordan and Israel with their working agenda, and Israel and Syria over the Golan Heights. I see no reason why this shouldn't lead to further progress."

In response to Arab fears that a Clinton administration will be pro-Israeli in orientation, Dr Van Hollen argued that much of this doubt was due to the exhortations of Clinton's campaign rhetoric. "Distinction has to be made between statements made in an American political campaign and those made after taking office," he said. "There may be some similarities."

He dismissed speculation that the US embassy in Israel may be transferred from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, in spite of Clinton's announcement that Jerusalem is "Israel's undivided capital."

"There is a clear misunderstanding here," Dr Van Hollen said. "To my knowledge there was no suggestion that the US embassy would be moved. This is not a possibility because it undercuts the idea that the US is playing an even-handed role in the

Middle East peace process." Until the new president selects his Secretary of State, Dr Van Hollen agreed that no foreign policy changes can truly be predicted for the Clinton administration.

"I have no idea who he will choose," he confided. "But I think he will want a man who will work in close cooperation with the cabinet and Congress; he must also be a man with the background and knowledge of international affairs, and thirdly, one who recognizes that we are in an entirely new international era following the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union."

As predictions also abound as to the identity of a possible Middle East negotiator, Dr Van Hollen confirmed that he will be a man of "very senior" calibre, such as former President Jimmy Carter or former Secretary of State James Baker.

Dr Van Hollen confirmed that Mr Clinton's commitment to human rights and democracy strongly emphasized during his presidential campaign, will now constitute a significant element in US foreign policy. Human rights standards, he added, are as applicable to Israel as to the rest of the Arab world.

"Israel is part and parcel of the Middle East and should be held to the same human rights standards as other countries," he said. "Definite concern has been shown in the US over violations of human rights in the Occupied Territories, and there will be continued concern for human rights in the region as a whole."

## AIPAC president resigns over secret negotiations with Clinton camp

By a Star Staff Writer

THE PRESIDENT of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, David Steiner, America's largest pro-Israel lobby, has resigned after being secretly tape-recorded boasting that AIPAC was "negotiating" with the Clinton campaign about key appointments and claiming he "cut a deal" with former US Secretary of State James Baker to get Israel extra aid in return for Jewish voters backing in the US presidential elections, *The Washington Times* reported.

Steiner said last week that he was resigning because some statements he made in a phone call two weeks ago "went beyond overzealousness and exaggeration and were simply and totally untrue." He was taped by New York businessman Harry Katz, who called the AIPAC leader 22 October posing as someone who was considering donating \$100,000 to pro-Israel congressional candidates. Steiner recommended giving contributions to a number of US Congressmen like Robert Kasen from Wisconsin and admitted to giving money to two others.

Katz said he tricked Steiner because he didn't think the "Jewish lobby" should have disproportionate political power. He added that he wanted Steiner to "admit to me the incredible infiltration of the Israeli lobby into the campaign."

In a transcript of the phone call, sent by the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) to *The Star*, Steiner told Katz: "We have a dozen people in his [Clinton] headquarters and they're going to get big jobs." He also said "we're negotiating with the Clinton camp on who might be secretary of state." Asked who he was hoping for Steiner replied: "I've got a list. But I can't really go through it. I'm not allowed to talk about it."

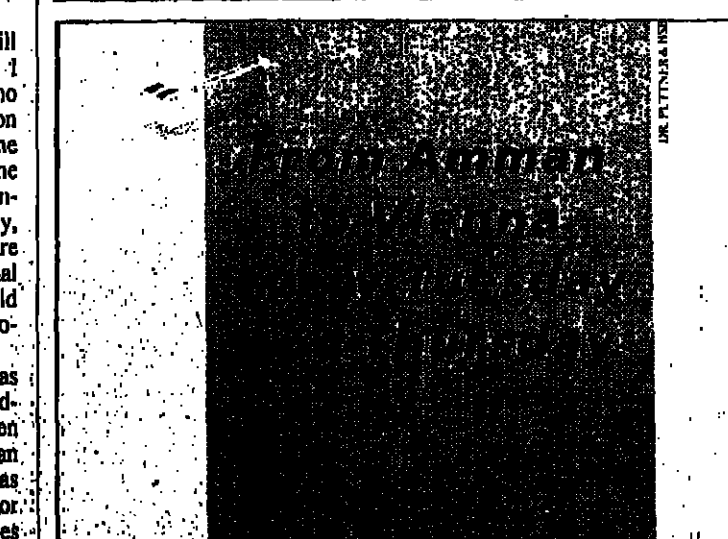
AIPAC officials later denied that they have such list or that they were negotiating with Clinton people over possible administration appointments. A Clinton aide denied that they were "negotiating with anybody about any job."

Steiner also told Katz that he had met with Baker to "cut a deal with him." Besides Israel's \$3 billion a year in US foreign aid "I got almost a billion dollars in other goodies that people don't even know about," Steiner said.

Steiner added that AIPAC did not endorse candidates, but he named a number of US representatives as personal choices and as people who have been good to Israel. He said that he knew Clinton for over 8 years and that the president-elect has Jewish friends and that "he's got something in his heart for the Jews, he has Jewish friends, Bush has no Jewish friends." He assured Katz that "Clinton is the best guy for us."



Baker: Cutting a deal with the Israeli lobby



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# Jordan 'most affected' by Gulf refugee influx

By a Star Staff Writer

A RECENT report issued by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), has revealed that of the five 'fields' serviced by the Agency — Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip — Jordan has been "most affected" by the influx of refugees following the 1990 Gulf Crisis.

But the news is not all bad, for the 1991-92 Report of the Commissioner General has also shown that despite the problems incurred by the flood of returnees, Jordan has coped well under trying circumstances. This has been achieved in part by the important role that UNRWA has played in maintaining essential health, education and social services for the Kingdom's refugees throughout this period.

The aftermath of both the Gulf Crisis and the ensuing war brought enormous change to the region within the 12 months under review in the report. Monitoring the arrival of over 300,000 returnees to Jordan, UNRWA recorded a sharp rise in unemployment, increased socio-economic difficulties and overcrowding in UNRWA schools.

By 30 June this year, UNRWA programs within its five fields served a total of around 2.65 million Palestinian refugees. The report reveals that due to new demands enforced upon the Agency, the last year has been one of "expansion and adjustment", entailing the introduction



UNRWA schools had to cope with 10,000 new students

of a number of new services. In an attempt to meet the rapidly rising demand for these services, UNRWA expenditure in 1991 alone ran to a total of \$308.1 million, a rise of just over five percent on the figure for 1990. Of this total, just over one quarter was spent on services for the Gaza Strip, 22.3 percent for the West Bank and 17.4 percent for services in Jordan.

In providing for Palestine refugees, UNRWA's three principle areas of operation are education, health, relief and social services. Education remains the Agency's largest program catering for

374,400 pupils, up to 10,000 of whom are new refugees. As a result of this dramatic jump in numbers, more than three-quarters of the Agency's 636 schools now operate on a double shift system, where two schools share a single building; one using the premises in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

UNRWA estimates that Jordan's quota of new refugee pupils stands high at 6,200. Nonetheless, the report states that Jordan has "coped extremely well, with an enrollment of 140,000 pupils in difficult circumstances." This is commendable when it is considered that over 93 percent of classes are double shifted in Jordan and that the severe weather conditions of last winter left several schools in need of urgent repair.

UNRWA education programs in the Kingdom have also had the extra task of introducing a compulsory tenth year into their schools, as well as implementing curriculum changes, as adopted by the Jordanian government.

The report states that an increased demand for UNRWA's health services was also prevalent during the year under review. The document quotes that Agency medical staff provided over 6.2 million consultations to patients in 1991, prompting UNRWA to introduce a new appointments system and to renovate and construct primary health care facilities. More emphasis is now being given to preventive medicine, while new approaches toward an integrated strategy for



A community rehabilitation center in the Jordan Valley

maternal health and family planning services has been approved.

Rather than suffering from the strain of increased demand, health care for Palestine refugees living in Jordan was described in the report as having "improved" throughout the year, with the construction of two new health centers and two mobile dental clinics being put into operation.

In response to the outbreak of the polio disease in the Jordan Valley in March this year, UNRWA also played an active role by working closely with the Ministry of Health in organizing its national polio immunization campaign, which met with enormous success.

Relief and social services, the third major area of UNRWA activity, were also affected by the economic and social dislocation that followed the Gulf Crisis. Between July 1991 and June 1992, the number of Palestinian refugees qualified and registered for special hardship assistance rose by 10 percent to more than 178,000.

In Jordan, the number of refugees registered with the Agency rose to nearly 1,011,000. Despite this dramatic increase, the demand for special hardship case status actually fell — to below three percent of the registered refugee population.

In the face of such adversity, UNRWA continued however to attend to its refugee development programs, particularly those for

people with special needs, women and disabled persons. Programs included literacy and numeracy training, house-hold maintenance and safety, basic business skills and legal literacy.

The report confirmed that throughout this period UNRWA development programs remained well on track in Jordan. For example, one decade after the launching of the first community rehabilitation project for disabled refugees, the Agency reviewed its progress and made funds available to ensure its continuing success.

In May this year in Aqaba, a substantial number of refugees who had not previously required UNRWA services complained of having been seriously affected by the severe reduction in port activities.

The Agency responded by registering almost 11,000 new refugees and set up a women's program center to offer training for women seeking employable skills and work opportunities.

Funded almost entirely by voluntary donor contributions, UNRWA has pledged to work constantly at improving its cost efficiency by applying the principle of self-reliance within all of its services and programs.

With its commitment to community initiative, self-help and income generation, the continued success of UNRWA programs in Jordan remains promising, despite the setbacks of the last two years. ■

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By Edouardo Mack

## Turkey

# The long EC haul

JOINING THE European Community is still high up on the political agenda in Ankara in spite of the latest refusal by the EC in December 1989 to allow Turkey to become its thirteenth member. Nonetheless, Turkey's position regarding the European Community is still very strong.

Ever since the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957, the Turkish government has been putting in bids to become a member. The candidacy has been rejected so far due to reports of human rights violations or the country's weak economy. Turkey's GNP per head is still only a third of that of the EC's poorest member, Portugal. In 1989 Turkey's candidacy was turned down again and a new bid was put off until 1993.

There are two arguments that are not often presented which affect Turkey's chances of joining the EC. The growing birth rate and the fact that Turkey is a predominantly Muslim country — "Islamic fundamentalism" is perceived as a threat by many European countries. Even though Turkey is a secular nation, there is a certain uneasiness about the country being part of Europe.

"Aspects like the troubles in Algeria and the Salman Rushdie affair pose a problem for us," explained Professor Haluk Kabaoglu, secretary general of the Istanbul Chamber of Industry and director of the European Community Institute.

"We are a secular country and we have been practising this very successfully. If the 'religion factor' is used against us, that's our fault. We don't do a good public relations job for ourselves."

There are 57 million inhabitants in Turkey today and the estimates are that this number will grow fast. According to Isah Alaton, president of Alaton, one of Turkey's most successful companies, the demographic problem is serious and no one should be surprised by the Community's fear of a potential 'invasion' of Turkish workers.

"Can you imagine the hordes of Turks going over there? This number will increase threefold in the next 50 years!" he said.

Mr Alaton is the only Social Democrat businessman in Turkey. Known as an outspoken politician, he is also very critical of the economic and political structure of the country, believing that the country has too many state-owned companies. Mr Alaton describes Turkey as a fast developing country which is much better off than most countries in the East, but he argues that the country will not obtain a seat in the Community for as long as the state holds 50 percent of the overall industrial output and 70 percent of the banking volume.

Most important, however, is that Turkey should change its taxation policies, as the onus for paying taxes lies with the company rather than with the employee. This creates unfavorable conditions for entrepreneurs wanting to start businesses and fosters conditions which encourage the flourishing black market. Eco-

omic experts say that the hidden economy is larger than the legal one, which poses a threat to the future development of industry.

However Turkey has reached an industrial level higher than that of Portugal or Greece, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. This was possible despite high inflation and a lack of investment from the EC. The country receives only an average of \$5 or \$6m a year, whereas countries like Spain receive \$50m.

According to conditions laid out in the Treaty of Ankara in 1957, Turkey is the only country that was entitled to an association membership that would permit the country to join the Community at the end.

"We have been getting less help

from the Community due to vetoes by the council on the side of the Germans and the Greeks," said Ertugrul Ihsan Ozol, secretary general of the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association. "The Greeks want to link our membership to the Cyprus cause whereas the Germans insist that the massacres of the Kurds are an obstacle to our joining."

Both arguments have been rebutted by Turkish government authorities. They complain that Turkey is accused of atrocities against the Kurds, but that little is said about the 2 million immigrants who live in the country, including 400,000 Turks from Iraq and 1 million Iranians.

"When one million Kurds fled Iraq after the Gulf War, we

helped them," explained Professor Kabaoglu, "but we got very little help from the EC. We provided 90 percent of the help." As for the Greek question, he says that the Greeks do not want to see the Cyprus question solved in order to stop Turkey from joining the Community.

In spite of all the obstacles that have prevented Turkey from being accepted by the Commission in Brussels, preparations are being made for its eventual acceptance. In 1987, Marmara University created a post-degree course on European integration. Attended by around 25 to 30 students and taught in English, the course is preparing Turkey's future leaders who will be dealing with EC issues. ■

Europe



Islam is seen as one argument against Turkey joining the EC

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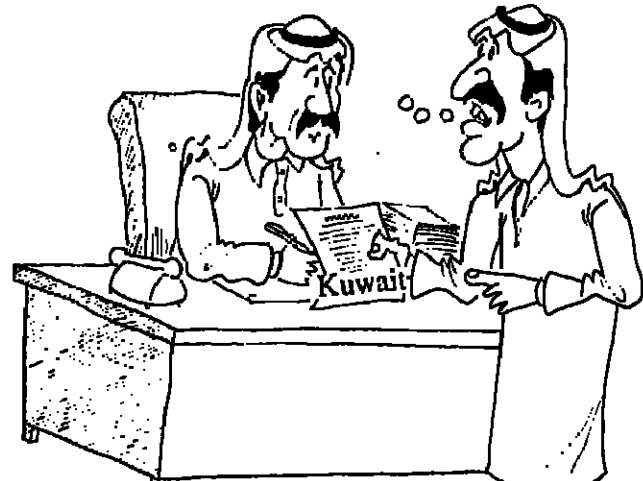
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Jalal Rifa'Ad-Dustour

## Our Say....

### Clinton and the Middle East

RECENT REVELATIONS about the involvement of the powerful Israeli lobby in the United States in bankrolling the election efforts of pro-Israel Congressmen should worry US citizenry more than us. Naturally, Arab qualms about the recent election of Bill Clinton to the White House are not soothed by the taped admissions of the AIPAC president about the lobby's close relations with Clinton aides-de-camp, nor the on-going negotiations over possible key appointments in the new administration. (See story on page 3)

It is too early to brand the coming administration as pro-Zionist, although Mr Clinton has not made any pretences about his commitment to the Hebrew state. We would rather take the president-elect at his word and assume that he will strive to play an even-handed role in the current peace process. We don't believe that Mr Clinton and members of his cabinet would risk breaking the peace process at this sensitive and advanced stage, by departing from the rules set out by former Secretary of State James Baker.

As strange as this might sound, Israel's best interest would be served by a US administration that maintains a credible role in the peace talks. It is this role that has earned the United States considerable influence over the various parties to the conflict so far. In spite of the objections of Israeli extremists, the peace talks are actually good for Israel. We believe the Israeli government has a keen interest in keeping the talks alive with the hope of averting a nasty alternative and signing a peace treaty with the Arabs.

The influence of the Clinton administration will matter once the parties involved get into substantive issues. Mr Clinton, like his predecessor, is against the creation of a Palestinian state, but he is not against a land-for-peace formula, nor is he overruling UN resolutions pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

What matters for the Arabs at this juncture is to keep the talks going until inauguration day in January next year. By maintaining dialogue, the parties are actually creating a momentum that is independent of America's direct involvement. This could be good for both sides. By neutralizing the Americans, Arabs and Israelis can approach their problems with less suspicions of a superpower tilt to either side. This could work in theory, but in practice it will depend on how successful the two sides will be in building concrete bridges of mutual trust.

For all parties to go home with a solid peace agreement, they will have to reach an equitable deal. That deal will have to satisfy the minimum justifiable requirements of each party, including the Palestinians. By the time Mr Clinton takes the oath and is ready to play politics, the peace process will have reached a phase where minor rather than major interference by the sponsor will be needed. We believe Mr Clinton will learn to walk before he can run where the Middle East is concerned. He doesn't have to rock the boat just now, no matter how he feels about Israel. Besides, the peace process is about cooperation, co-existence and lasting peace. It is not about Israel's demise or liquidation. In this case what's good for the Palestinians, and the rest of the Arabs, could in a unique way be good for Israel. ■

## Clinton and Congress Unraveling the gridlock

By Jenab Tutunji  
Star Washington Correspondent

THE UNITED States has a new president. We are about to embark on the Clinton era. It is clear to everyone now that Americans want change. Of those who exercised the right to vote, 43 percent supported Clinton, and 19 percent backed Perot. While Clinton did not win a majority of the popular vote, he won a landslide victory in electoral votes (370 to Bush's 168), which indicates that his support is both even and broad. Equally important, Americans voted a Democrat into the White House at the same time as granting the Democratic Party a majority in Congress, so the gridlock between the executive and legislative branches of government may well become a thing of the past.

In a sense the election was a victory for democracy. The Republican strategy for victory had come to depend more and more on negative campaigning and personal issues — victory seemed to depend on assassinating the opposing candidate's character.

The assumption behind this was that the electorate is made up of a bunch of apathetic know-nothings who respond in a Pavlovian fashion to irrelevant stimuli and spurious concerns. This time the American public said enough is enough and insisted on focusing on the important issues. The media, which thrive on scandal and delight in pursuing red herrings, decided to be more responsible.

To a large extent, it was the public that set the agenda for political debate, and the public refused to be sidetracked. The focus became the economy, jobs, the deficit and health care. In many Senate and House contests, women's rights, abortion and sexual harassment were also decisive issues. Voter turnout increased by 8.7 percent over 1988.

More young people, who are generally not likely to vote, turned out at the polls: In fact there was an 18 to 20 percent increase in all age groups under 60. More women voted, and more women candidates were elected too. The only notable decline was among black voters and those over the age of 60.

Many people were unsure of Clinton, but even more people were sure that they did not want Bush for a second term. Strangely, the president had become captive to an obsession to please the radical right in the Republican Party. He pandered to the excesses of religious extremists and social reactionaries with whom he did not see eye to eye. He lost touch with the average voter, alienating women, Reagan Democrats and many intelligent and educated Republicans. He became a do-nothing president on domestic matters, except when he stepped in to defend the interests of the rich and the powerful, or to favor the interests of business over the rights of individuals.

The most recent example of this concerns health insurance provided by companies for their employees. Over 60 percent of Americans with private insurance are covered by so-called self-funding insurance plans. A firm in Houston arbitrarily cut the health benefits of an employee

from one million dollars to 5,000 dollars when he developed AIDS. A federal appeals court said the law does not protect employees from such blatant victimization. Last Monday, the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal. The court had received advice from the Bush administration, whose position is that companies are free under federal law to make changes in health plans "that disadvantage persons with AIDS for the purpose of reducing plan costs." This attitude does not say anything complimentary about the Bush administration, while also highlighting the wrongs of the health insurance system. Change is indeed urgently needed.

On the international front, the Bush administration is about to engage in a trade war with the European Community over French subsidies for oilseed producers. For two years, the dispute over European farm subsidies has been blocking the successful conclusion of an agreement within the Uruguay Round of trade talks that could stimulate a \$200 billion increase in world trade.

The issue is not that Europe is blameless on this matter, but that President Mitterrand is in no position, due to domestic political considerations, to make concessions on farm subsidies at this time. A trade war could lead to a global depression, from which we would all suffer.

President-elect Clinton is facing a formidable array of issues. At home, the task of engineering a speedy economic recovery faces a conflict between the need for deficit reduction and spending increases to stimulate the economy. Speedy action is needed to please the public at a time when more and more companies are opting to lay off workers to reduce operating costs and boost profits in the face of international competition and changes in the economy which Clinton does not control. Abroad, there are such daunting concerns as trade tensions with Europe and Japan, trade relations with Mexico and Canada, support for Russian reform, fear of the spread of the Yugoslav civil war into an international war in the Balkans, concerns about the Middle East peace talks, and the dispute over human rights with China.

Speedy action is required, particularly on the domestic front, before the honeymoon with the electorate comes to an end. Concerning the Middle East peace talks in Washington, a Clinton spokesman has been in touch with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to urge progress "without a slow down" during the transition period. Yet much has yet to be decided by Clinton himself, who is thought to be eager to please everybody and to build coalitions wherever possible.

At some point Bill Clinton will find that he cannot reconcile the pressures on him from all sides, and will have to make some hard decisions and stick to them. This is an aspect of Clinton's character that has yet to be tested by the demands of the presidency. It is a possible weak spot about which George Bush has raised doubts. Let us hope that Clinton is up to the task. ■

Jenab Tutunji is a Jordanian writer based in Washington.



## An Asian Worldview

# New pact highlights political insecurities of small states

By M.G.G. Pillai  
In Kuala Lumpur

A TRIPARTITE security pact among the United States, China and Japan to replace a weakening United States strategic presence in Asia is unlikely to be accepted in South-east Asia or even among the three concerned powers. The Singapore foreign minister, Mr Wong Kan Seng, in welcoming the proposal from a Chinese "think tank" in his speech to the Asia Society in New York last month, only highlights Singapore's political and strategic insecurities in a region where she often tends to be out of step. She fears Japan's possible militarization as Southeast Asians fear a politically active China outside her borders amidst the United States, sans the rhetoric, winding down its strategic presence in Asia.

The empire, such as it is, is no more. Military and political power without captive markets cannot survive for long. The Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi ensured the death of the Manchester cotton industry, and the British Empire, with his call on Indians to spin their own cotton. The United States faces competition poorly, within and without, against countries long within her sphere of influence; and begs, threatens, cajoles them to buy American-made products and alters the trade rules to her own advantage when she can.

The Philippines Senate called her bluff over Subic Bay Naval Base when she refused to pay an economic rent for its use. Her other base there, Clark Air Force Base, is covered in volcanic ash from Mount Pinatubo, with looters taking what was left. The two bases, more than half-a-century old, faded into history as those from Thailand and Indo-China. The United States withdrawal jarred the Philippines economically and politically, but the egg was on her face. Washington's charisma of power begins to desert her.

Singapore now looks for another patron. That cannot be Japan. Her ferocious wartime treatment of the Chinese, in China and Southeast Asia, still disturbs a normal relationship. Neither does she want China because that would upset the other countries in Southeast Asia. Besides, Singapore is uncomfortable in any security arrangement that does not include the United States. She offered the United States limited facilities on the island when Washington's talks with Manila were turning sour, partly on the unstated premise that no Southeast Asian country would "dare" attack her because of this presence.

Mr Wong believes that the tripartite agreement reduces regional insecurities and checks Japan's and China's strategic ambitions in Asia. But this assumes that China or Japan or both would acquiesce. That is uncertain. While Southeast Asia does not oppose a US presence, she is indifferent to whether she stays or goes; nor is she enamored of a pact that includes all three. Certainly, Japan has more support in Asia than Mr Wong suggests she has, and China, less than Singapore presumes.

Japan's defeat of the predominant pre-war colonial powers — Britain, France, the Netherlands, the United States — early in the Second World War destroyed the myth of Western superiority and invincibility, and reinforced an Asian coming of age and political consciousness. The dismantling of Western colonial empires began with Indonesia in 1945. In the war's last legs, and ended with Brunei in 1984, not all peacefully. The independence armies Japan raised and trained — in Indonesia, Myanmar, Indo-China — had to wrest control of their countries from the Netherlands, Britain and France.

Japan is seen, therefore, as an ally in most countries of Asia. But not China, which backed communist insurgencies in every Southeast Asian country, and which ended only when she so decreed. In Myanmar, that was not until 1989. China's centuries-old presumption of a Southeast Asian sphere of influence adds to underlying regional insecurities and fears. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) moved closer to Indo-China, reflexively, on the unstated premise of Vietnam's traditional hostility to her neighbor in the north and her own reservations about China's intentions.

With or without Washington's disengagement from Asia, Japan and China is poised to strive for strategic influence in Southeast Asia. China's claim to the Spratleys and Paracel group of islands in the South China Sea is an early declaration of her strategic perceptions. Japan's dominant economic presence is held back by a constitutional bar on an overseas military presence and Chinese fear of a resurgent Japanese militarism. The difficulties she faced when she sent a token flotilla of naval ships to the Gulf earlier this year effects the minefields ahead, in Japan and elsewhere.

But Japan could pit her economic presence with a politically invasive China in Southeast Asia, or the two could join hands to threaten. Dato Seri Mahathir's proposal, in December 1990, for an East Asian Economic grouping, which ASEAN downgraded to a caucus (BAEC), involved a Sino-Japanese presence in a larger organization so that their rapprochement or quarrel would not destabilize the region. The approach is not new. The Schuman-Monnet proposal for a European coal and steel community (ECSC) was to prevent France and Germany over going to war again, and progressed gradually in four decades to the European Community (EC) this year. ASEAN locks Malaysia and Indonesia into a regional grouping for the same reason.

Singapore misunderstands, or chooses to, China's role in a tripartite pact. Washington's interference in China's internal affairs, her insistence on democratic and human rights principles, as she perceives it, her disregard for Beijing's historical dilemmas in the past of this nature. She is one of few countries capable of a nuclear strike on the United States mainland. She fine-tunes her foreign policy now as she developed economically, based on her perceptions of right and wrong, not some one else's. And she seeks neither Washington's support nor hostility for her long term policies.



A Chinese family visits a toy shop in Beijing, (below) Emperor Akhilito



So it is with Japan. Be- holden as she is to Wash- ington for her markets and, still, for her security, Japan is attuned to China politically, culturally, strate- gically. Her gerontocrat- ic leaders were young enough to fight for Japan when she lost the war to the United States; their re- straint in dealing with Washington stems from the traditional Eastern subservience, however manifested, before a mili- tary victor, and the reluctance to lose mar- kets in the United States and elsewhere that came from the Japanese sales spurt in the 1960s and beyond.

But she worries more at Beijing's politi- cal and strategic developments than Wash- ington's. Emperor Akhilito's visit to China last month was the opening salvo in more than half-a-century to wipe the slate clean, underlining the Confucian dictum of a long journey beginning with the first step. No instant decisions or surprises were expect- ed, but then none could be in rationalizing a relationship two millennia old.

The Japanese administrative are political gerontocracy, and their Chinese counter- parts, will make way, with time, for the postwar generation of leaders. Their suc- cessors' nationalistic pragmatism, shorn off the ghosts of the Second World War and of the Communist regulation in China, would conflicts, once again, with Western percep- tions of that relationship. The United States' role then would, all best, be periph- eral. Heightened Sino-Japanese cultural perceptions of a wounded "paper tiger" in Washington inhibits any pretence of equal- ity in any future regional relationship or partnership. Which is why, despite Wash- ington's objections, there is much private support in Japan, and official support in China, for BAEC. Even if that were not so, Washington is averse to any deal which enhances Beijing's influence in Southeast Asia.

Why Mr Wong should believe in, or hope for, such an alliance reflects his mis- ty-eyed Confucianist perceptions and Sin- gapore's support for Dr Henry Kissinger's stratagem of a protecting superpower — the United States — with regional powers doing her dirty work within their spheres of influence. But he represents neither Asian nor ASEAN nor regional views on this but is, at best, an overseas Chinese view, at worst a Singaporean view. Noth- ing more, nothing less. ■

M.G.G. Pillai is a journalist based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

## Syria on the move Private sector takes the lead as investments pour in

By Riad al Khouri

THE ECONOMY of Syria appears to have entered a new stage of development after the country built a solid economic foundation throughout the past two decades, with political stability from the beginning of the 1970s as the decisive factor in economic growth. The country's infrastructure is now in a position to contribute favourably to economic development. The railways, international highways, airports, seaports, dams, universities, schools, hospitals, communication networks etc. built or modernized in Syria over the past couple of decades have established solid grounds for economic prosperity.

So far in the 1990s, Syria has witnessed solid growth through encouraging private business to take its full role in the econom- ic process alongside the public sector. In this regard, a number of economic laws and regulations have been issued aiming at giving the private sector incentives to in- vest. In the mid-80s, the government en- couraged the setting up of mixed sector agricultural and tourism projects; but by the 1990s, policy had moved towards a comprehensive encouragement of the pri- vate sector represented in the issuance of Law No. 10 of 1991 on encouraging local, Arab and foreign investments and Law No. 20 of 1991 on amending tax rates. The two laws aimed at attracting local, expatri- ate, Arab and foreign capital and the coun- try has now partially succeeded in creating an encouraging atmosphere for invest- ment. Capital equal to a total of over one and a quarter billion dollars has come into the country over the past year or so. In- vestments applied for and approved by the Higher Investment Council amounted to over 460 including more than 225 industri- al and over 200 services projects.

Capital is still heading for investments in Syria due to good overall conditions in- cluding political and economic stability as well as the availability of raw materials, energy, manpower and skilled labor, in ad- dition to Syrian businessmen, who have long industrial and trade experience. These new investments added to projects already established will contribute to increasing exports and employment.

The private and mixed sectors have con- tributed favorably to many domains of economic life. Their share in GNP is now 55% (and of total capital assets 52%) in- cluding 99% of agriculture, 72% of trans- port, 62% of trade, 59% of finance and leasing, 13% of other services, 50% of construction and 45% of industry.

Syrian products now successfully com- pete in some European and Gulf countries. The private sector increased its share of commodity exports from 33% in 1987 to over 68% today (excluding crude oil). Pri- vate businessmen are also handling close to half of Syria's imports, up from 25% in 1987. These figures indicate the new role enjoyed by the private sector in Syria and are a reflection of flexible economic poli- cies.

The principal author of these policies has been Dr Mohammad Imadi, govern- ment minister and economic czar. But he is rumored to be the next head of ESCWA, and a cabinet reshuffle set for early next year will see the introduction of new faces into the government. If these are liberals, then Syria is set for a period of even great- er economic prosperity. ■

Riad al Khouri is a Jordanian econo- mist and editor of Economic Perspec- tives newsletter.

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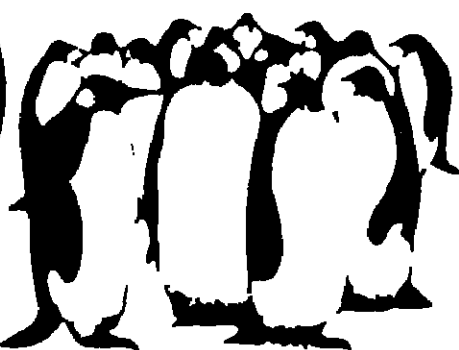
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# AROUND TOWN



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## The First Children's Theater Festival

### First step on a long way towards recognition

By Vesnu Masliarqn  
Special To The Star

TWENTY-FIVE years after the inauguration of the first Jordanian theater, the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Jordanian Artists' Union organized the First Children's Theater Festival in Amman under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor.

Running between 26 October and 12 November, there were seven plays competing in the festival, recreating the wonderful world of children, colorfully presented on a variety of artistic levels.

The plays not only echoed the current situation of children's theater in Jordan, but also reflected social and cultural values and their application towards achieving pedagogical, educational and artistic objectives. They also showed how "beliefs" are used to improve the quality of a child's life, providing good conditions for a happy childhood and healthy growth.

It seemed that the social beliefs of the child and his world served as the solid foundation on which the festival's participants built their theatrical approach. Such beliefs also affected the selection committee and guided the festival's jury when evaluating the theatrical productions.

The Star talked to both actors and directors during the festival, recording their comments on their theatrical experiences. They all expressed difficulty in dealing with the concepts found in the world of children. As actor director Imad Yunis remarked, "What sounds logical to us adults isn't necessarily so to children. The world of the child has unpredictable colors, sounds and rhythms. It has weird ideas and an unusual understanding of the world."

The festival was a wonderful opportunity for children to meet and share their ideas and views about the productions they attended. It was also an occasion for theater artists to meet professionally and evaluate their work.

In discussing the artistic level of the productions, it was obvious that the festival failed to introduce new standards. It merely reflected Jordanian children's theater and its artistic status.

"We stirred water this time," commented Wafa Qusai, a member of the festival's Higher Council and head of the Children's Theater Department at the Ministry of Culture. He had hoped that the festival would provide the incentives to the parties concerned to promote the artistic standards of children's theater.

According to Jameel Awad, actor, director and playwright, the festival was a first step in developing children's theater and spreading the idea of its benefits and necessity in the community.

Meanwhile, Nader Amran, scenographer, director and another member of the festival's jury, expressed resignation over the festival's artistic level. "Children's theater doesn't mean stupid theater," he said. "It needs sound ideas and comprehensive philosophy, adequate enough to build a world of fantasy which is close to the child and his way of feeling and thinking."

The festival brought another aspect into the focus of panel discussions, which deals with the issue of language. For some critics, local Arabic should be resolutely eliminated from the theater, and full recognition should be given to classical Arabic. However as it was stressed, language is not only a means of communication, but it also carries patriotic and educational messages.

For others, the prevailing fact that children always communicate in slang seemed decisive enough, so that they gave full recognition to local Arabic. They stressed on the importance of simplicity and clarity in communication, regardless of what language might be used. As the jury pointed out, it is significant to convey the messages, ideas and symbols of society in the easiest way possible, so that a child can understand them quickly.

"A writer who writes for children should love, respect and understand children," said Hassan Taher, a guest from Lebanon who is a playwright for children and a composer. "Slogans and lecturing will never involve child's emotions and his mind. The writer and director should stress on the essence and the spirit of the concepts they deal with, as much as on the harmony of all theatrical elements, exposed in a highly artistic and sensitive manner," he said.

For visiting Iraqi playwright and director Salam Jazairi, theater is an art activity, not simply a means through which to pass ideas.

In the end, maybe one of the most important discoveries of the festival was the relationship formed between the audience and the shows presented. In spite of the audience showing high sensitivity towards good artistic standards and creative productions, it was also evident that there is no habit of theater-going in Jordan.

There are still other issues to be worked out concerning children's theater and its own special genre in terms of color, movement, language and rhythm. There is also the question of what will be left to be studied and gleaned for the next festival.

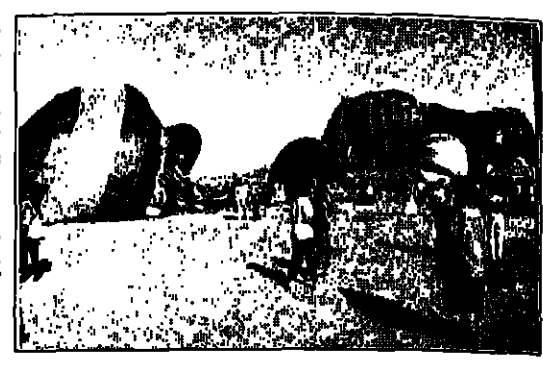
However, the first step has been made, and the way forward is still too long to predict. ■



On the occasion of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday, fifty colorful balloons filled the sky above Wadi Rum.

The event was organized by the Ministry of Tourism in co-operation with the Jordanian

Armed Forces and Royal Jordanian. Fifty balloons, some carrying world champions on board, participated in the race, being the first of its kind in Jordan. The competition revolved around the launching of a Royal Jordanian balloon, which competitors followed in an attempt to be the nearest to land next to it. The winning balloon has received a 'Champion of all Champs' trophy, in addition to a handsome ten thousand dollars!



With the rapid approach of the start of the Pepsi National Rally, the thirty competitors who have so far registered are busy preparing their cars for the event as well as spending time practicing the route.

Details of the rally route were announced last Thursday. The cars will start at three minute intervals from the Amman International Motor Show at 7:00 pm on Thursday 19 November, and will head north to pass through the first special stage, which is located near the village of Marsa. After passing through several areas, including Jerash, the cars will reach the final test, located near the village of Kufri Khal, north of Jerash. The competing cars will then return to Jerash for servicing and repairs. The same route will be followed for a second time, and then the return to Amman will result in the first car arriving at the finishing line at the Royal Automobile Club at 2:00 pm on Friday.

All leading Jordanian drivers have registered for this important rally, where points for the Jordan National Drivers' Championship are important. Scrutiny of all the competing cars will take place at the Royal Automobile Club Driver Training Center on Wednesday between 3:00 and 4:00 pm, and is open to the public.

Everyday life is an art form, and art is everyday life. These are times when anything goes, when what's happening on the street is as every bit as important culturally as what's hanging on the wall at the art gallery. The world's a village, brought into your living room at the touch of a button. Instantaneous communication is no longer the stuff of dreams, it's reality for all of us. Cross-over and redesigned are the buzz words of a new perception of culture, that truly multi-cultural society is just a question of time.

That's something not only Swatch but a whole generation of avant-garde artists and designers proved so convincingly in the late 80s. So it's no coincidence that Vivienne Westwood and Igor, two of the most impressive exponents of this new networked idea of art, have designed the highlights in the new Swatch and POP Swatch Collection.

Igor is not only the pseudonym of 34-year old Italian artist Igor Tuvetti, but also stands for a universal creative vision. Igor is an all-rounder and rides roughshod over the border-lines that separate disciplines. He draws comics, he's a designer, a musician, a film-maker and painter all at the same time. 'Putti' and 'Yuri' will be available with dozens of other new Swatch and POP Swatch models at retail outlets from September. And as always, they'll be Swiss-made, quartz precise, with a one year guarantee.



will also take part in this special week at the Marriott Hotel by giving a 'swingin' jazzy' dinner concert. The concert will be on Thursday 19 November at 9:30 pm.

## Agenda

### EXHIBITIONS

Under the patronage of HRH Princess Alia, The Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts will feature 'Studies in Spatial Time', an art exhibition by Shakir Hassan Al Said. The exhibition will be opened on Saturday 21 November at 5:00 pm.

At the Marriott Hotel this Thursday, 19 November at 4:00 pm, a book exhibition for the little ones will be opened by HRH Prince Ra'ad Bin Zeid.

### JAZZ CONCERT

The Christian Escudé Band

### FIELD TRIPS

Mr Konstantinos Politis will lead a field trip to the excavations at Deir 'Ain Abata, sponsored by The British Museum. Departure will be from the Amra Hotel parking lot at 9:00 am by bus.

### LECTURES

The Friends of Archaeology Center will host a lecture by Dr Salih Sirri entitled 'Dohaleh, a new site in northern Jordan'. Dohaleh is an agricultural settlement southeast of Irbid. The lecture will commence at 7:00 pm.

A special section  
on global affairs prepared for  
The Star

THE 1000TH ISSUE  
OF THE STAR

# The World Paper

BOOMING CHINA

November  
1992

## The real leap forward

BY ZHOU LIFANG  
in Beijing, PRC

YESTERDAY'S POISON is today's meat. This turn of phrase perhaps best describes China 13 years after the country began its ground-breaking economic reforms.

The market economy, considered a scourge only a few years ago, is now being reinvented as something socialistic. It has revived the People's Republic by boosting its economy, providing a better life for its citizens, strengthening its national defense, and in doing so, allowing it to remain a stout bulwark of socialism.

Though Deng Xiaoping, China's de facto supreme leader, never used the term "market economy" when he first proposed reform, he had been known long before for his "cat theory" - white or black, he who catches mice is a good cat. In other words, whatever improves China's economic growth, the people's well-being and the country's national strength is good and should be encouraged. Deng's "cat theory" was a leap of faith away from the policies of the past.

Ever since the People's Republic was founded in 1949, China's economy had been based on the Soviet model: a highly centralized planned economy that stressed heavy industry at the expense of light industry and agriculture.

The economic planning system was inflexible, and initiative and enthusiasm were stifled.

Worse still, the "big common rice bowl" - egalitarianism in practice - treated everyone the same, irrespective of job performance, thus further dissipating any incentive to improve efficiency. Also, basic incompetence in economic administration and a certain rashness in policy-making, such as that shown by Mao during the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960), resulted in an enormous waste of national wealth.

Drastic reform was in order if China hoped to catch up with the industrialized countries and become strong and prosperous, and Deng led the way, initiating reforms in 1979.

The first economic sector targeted for change was agriculture. The commune system was abandoned and replaced with a contractual system which shifted the focus of production to individual households. After paying taxes and meeting collective quotas, individual farmers were allowed to sell their surplus on the market. Reforms also allowed farmers to choose what crops they could grow and form rural corporations.

In 1984, reforms were extended to the commercial and industrial sectors.

Continued on next page





## The real leap forward

Continued from previous page

Control over state enterprises shifted from national to local authorities and broad "guidance" plans replaced rigid quotas. Contractual relationships were established in the commercial and industrial sectors, as they were in agriculture, to encourage innovation and the production of surpluses.

Bankruptcy laws and other financial codes were established. The government encouraged an "appropriate" level of private business activity to supplement the state sector and even experimented with stock exchanges and futures markets. Some state institutions were allowed to experiment with shares and leasing arrangements.

Meanwhile, China began to open up to the outside world by encouraging tourism and foreign investment, increasing cultural exchange and sending students abroad for advanced studies. Diplomatically, China's greater openness has led to recognition of South Korea and the first visit by the Emperor of Japan in 2,000 years.

By mid-1992, 50,000 foreign-funded enterprises had been authorized with a total committed investment of US\$63.35 billion, and 20,000 of them were already in operation. They account for 4.9 percent of China's total industrial output and their exports are worth \$12 billion a year, or 17 percent of national exports.

The goal of the reforms was to integrate state planning with market forces to change the entire structure of production, employment and wages into a more flexible and productive system. So far, the reforms have been a tremendous success. The facts speak for themselves.

When reforms were initiated, leaders set a goal of quadrupling the 1980 GNP by the year 2000. The plan was to double GNP by 1990, then double that again by 2000. The first phase was achieved two years ahead of schedule in 1988, and if the current growth rate of 12 percent continues, meeting the second phase can be achieved ahead of schedule, too. This means that what China will have achieved in 20 years will be four times what it had achieved in the 30 years prior to 1980.

Grain output has increased by 3.4 percent a year to stay well ahead of population growth. The annual volume of foreign trade has tripled to \$138 billion, and in the first seven months of this year it rose almost 20 percent.

National income has grown by an annual average of 8 to 9 percent. In 1991, the average annual income went up for both urban and rural Chinese by about 15 percent, well ahead of the annual inflation rate of 6 percent.

The market has been brisk and people's standard of living has risen steadily. In cities and towns, department stores and cooperatives are well-stocked and private vendors line the streets selling

Zhou Lifang is the dean emeritus of the journalism department at Beijing University.

clothes, household wares, drinks, vegetables and fruits.

Many cities are sporting new skylines dominated by high-rise buildings. Color TVs, refrigerators, washing machines and in some cases even VCRs are standard furnishings in city households. Meanwhile, there has been a new housing boom in the countryside. In the more prosperous south, many of the new houses are two- and three-story dwellings of fairly modern design. In more prosperous rural areas, TVs (mostly black and white), washers and bicycles are now common.

But economic reforms are not risk-free. By 1988, it was clear that rapid growth had led to an overheated economy with double-digit inflation. An austerity program was initiated by the end of the year to consolidate and cool down the economy. At the same time,

confidence in the economy began to decrease since many people were no longer sure how far the reforms would go—and to what end, socialism or capitalism? As a result, the GNP growth rate slumped from 11.2 percent in 1988 to 3.9, 5, and 7 percent in the following three years. Large and medium-size state firms were particularly hard hit by the slack market.

Again, Deng came to the rescue. During his inspection of southern China in early 1992, he stated that planning did not necessarily belong just to socialism and the market to capitalism; the market economy could be geared to a socialist society as well. Hence, the birth of the concept of "socialist market economy" which Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin later endorsed. Deng also pushed for quicker and bolder steps in reform and economic development.

The economy soon picked up, the market rebounded and the rate of growth surged again, hitting 12 percent

in the third quarter of 1992.

Nonetheless, a number of problems remain to be tackled. In the private sector, there is too much investment in fixed assets and construction, and too little investment in energy, transportation and infrastructure. In the public sector, two-thirds of state companies continue to operate with steep losses. Some economists have warned of the possibility of a new round of overheating and inflation.

In response, the government has tightened credit. At the same time, the new finance minister, Liu Zhongli, has called for radical disengagement of the state from the economy. "Enterprises should be left to sink or swim in the market," said Liu in a recent interview. "The state coffer is no lifeboat for them."

While the economic boom has brought tremendous benefits, the vices that have accompanied it such as corruption, theft, fraud, tax evasion, drug trafficking, prostitution, kidnapping, homicide and other criminal offenses are becoming more common. So much so that the authorities have begun a campaign to crack down on such crimes to maintain public order and political stability.

Though undoubtedly benefiting from the market economy, China is determined to uphold socialism as a more advanced stage of social development than capitalism. Offering the underdog a better life and higher standard of living, socialism remains the most popular system with workers, farmers and other laborers who constitute the overwhelming majority of China's population.

Socialism can prevent the polarization of society by banning exploitation and curbing excessive profits through taxation and macroeconomic controls. Socialism is also better equipped to institute a safety net for those inevitably left unemployed by the failing of poorly managed enterprises. Other problems that can be successfully resolved only under socialism include the construction of large public works projects, the improvement of infrastructure, and helping the 35 million people who are still struggling against starvation in China.

With the nation continuing to support socialism, the Chinese Communist Party is apparently secure in its position as the leading party, as confirmed by last month's national congress of the Chinese Communist Party. But still to be addressed is the sensitive but inevitable question of political reform. At present, the issue is still confined to topics such as streamlining bureaucracy.

Whether or not political reform in China will eventually touch on the more sensitive issues like the multiparty system, free elections and freedom of speech is not an immediate concern for the Chinese leadership. But some people argue that economic and political reforms are like the two wheels of a cart. If just one of them turns, the cart will just remain in the same spot, turning in circles. Perhaps China can find a way out of this impasse by devising yet another solution similar to the concept of a "socialist market economy."

## A millionaire with a plan: make all the peasants rich

Entrepreneur turns poor village into rich town

By PENG SHUIJIE  
in Daqiu, PRC

"I'M STILL A peasant at heart," says Yu Zuomin, 63. His stooped shoulders and sun-wrinkled face bear witness to a life lived in the poverty of rural China.

But around his stooped shoulders is a Pierre Cardin suit, and his wrinkled eyes view the world from behind gold-rimmed glasses. Instead of a bicycle, his preferred mode of transportation is his chauffeur-driven Mercedes. With an estimated personal wealth of US\$18 million, Yu is one of the richest men in China. He has succeeded in a nation where many of the 900 million people living in rural areas are still struggling to overcome poverty.

Yu says he knows a good deal about the peasants of rural China, and that may be the secret of his success: "I know them better than anyone else. They want nothing but to live a better life."

Yu is the general manager of a rural corporation in the village of Daqiu in northern China, about 250 kilometers northwest of Beijing. He has had only six months of formal education and can barely read and write, yet he controls an expanding industrial empire of 226 factories and 28 joint ventures producing steel, foodstuffs, clothing and more.

"My village is very wealthy, but I don't want to retire and enjoy it now," says Yu in his luxurious office overlooking the town. "What I'm doing is building a successful path for the country's peasants to break out of poverty."

Today, residents live in modern housing among landscaped flower gardens, fountains and trees, and are served by well-stocked shops. Broad, well-paved avenues divide the village's planned layout.

Twelve years ago, Daqiu was very different. The saline soil was baked hard and dry, barely able to produce enough grain to feed the people. There was no irrigation system and fruit trees would not grow. The shabbily dressed villagers lived in clay houses with poor sanitation. Half of them were illiterate, and young men were so poor that they were unable to support wives. Village girls had to leave town in order to find suitable

spouses. This was the drudgery into which Yu was born and in which he lived for half a century.

The remarkable success of Yu and his enterprises is the story of the potential of economic reform in China. Yu's path



Millionaire Yu made his fortune by betting on China's continuing economic growth.

to prosperity began in 1978 with the decision of the Third Plenary Session of the Chinese Communist Party to initiate economic reforms in rural China. Yu, who listens to the radio to keep up with current affairs, detected a dramatic change in the state-run news media after the plenary session. The clamor about class struggle changed to a call for the people to make themselves rich.

As the head of the village since 1954, Yu called a meeting to find out what getting rich was all about. He discovered, contrary to popular belief, that the only people in the village who were really rich before the Communist takeover were not local landlords, but those who owned industrial enterprises in urban areas. The villagers entrusted Yu with their savings of about \$30,000 to fund an industrial enterprise. Yu decided the first project would be a steel plant. He recruited industry experts and designers from outside, and supplied the labor with local townsmen.

His timing could not have been better. China was ripe for progress as it emerged from the stagnation and turmoil of the Cultural Revolution. While others debated over the path to reform, Yu built up his empire. The steel plant was a tre-

mendous success, which was followed by successes in printing, electronics and high-frequency radio tube production.

Yu's boldness paid off again later when China was forced into an austerity program in 1989 to control soaring inflation and slow down the overheated economy. The result was a sluggish market which forced the closure of one-third of the country's rural enterprises. State-run enterprises were also hit hard.

However, Yu knew it was no time to cut back; he decided to gamble on better times to come. He poured all the reserve funds he had into expanding his factories and buying raw materials at rock-bottom prices. He even pulled down all the village's brick-and-tile houses that had been built long ago as temporary housing and built more than 100 new, three-story apartment villas for the 4,000 villagers.

Yu admits that his style is autocratic and that although some people might not like it, he is accepted. "I've been right, so that helps," says Yu.

Earlier this year, Deng Xiaoping toured southern China and called for the country to accelerate the pace of reforms and open more quickly to the outside world. China has responded by plunging into a new round of economic development. But Yu was almost a year ahead of others with his economic efficiency and expansion programs. Last year, Yu's enterprises were the most lucrative in China.

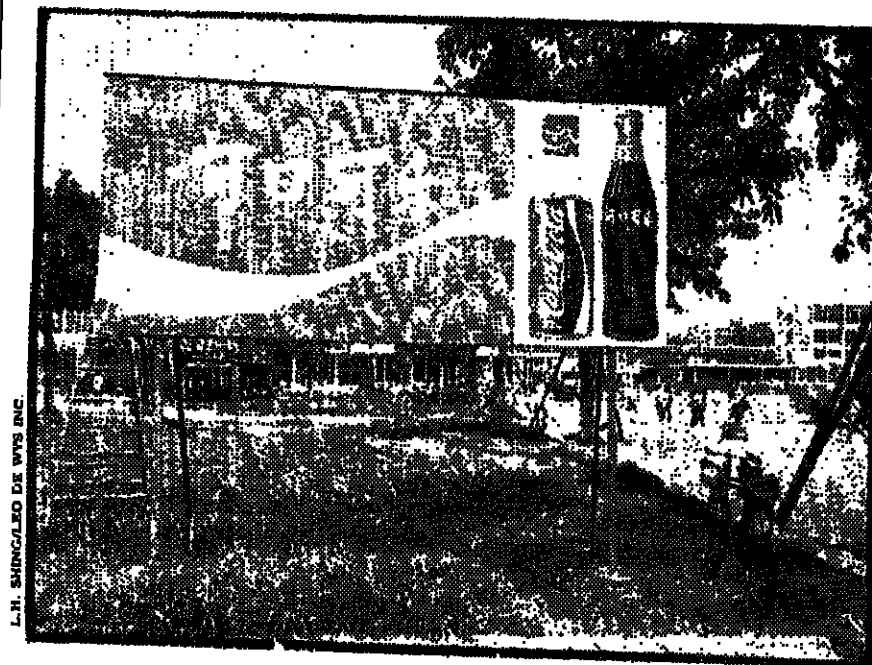
"Just as the early bird catches the worm, in the vast countryside of China, the earlier you have grasped the essence of the party's line, the easier it'll be to become rich," says Yu.

However, Yu's brashness and success has also aroused suspicion. His outspokenness has offended local government leaders who, out of spite (he claims), have yet to repair the roads leading to his village, making it look even more like an oasis of prosperity in the economic desert of rural China. There have been accusations that he has built his empire on bribery and graft. Nonetheless, hundreds of city and enterprise managers visit Daqiu every day to learn Yu's lessons and see for themselves the industrial success story.

A veteran party leader once told Yu that he thought Yu's car and opulent house should belong to a government minister rather than to a leader of a village, to which Yu angrily responded: "I'm only a peasant, I have no rank. But I have done no less than you. If you have led the poor to the building of a new China, I have led them to a rich life."

Yu has provided not only a rich life for the villagers, but also a rich quality of life. He is currently trying to send 100 local students abroad to study.

"My greatest wish is for Deng Xiaoping to visit my village some day," says Yu. Then, with the faintest flicker of a smile, he adds: "This would at least make the local bureaucrats repair the roads." ♦



## The China scorecard

TVs, investment and pigs

Number of Coca Cola plants in China: 13

Percent of industrial output in Guangdong province accounted for by state enterprises in 1978: 73

Percent of industrial output in Guangdong province accounted for by state enterprises in 1990: 35

Estimated direct investment in China by Taiwan in 1992: US\$4 billion

Estimated indirect investment in China by Taiwan in 1992: \$7 billion

Cost of labor for an assembly worker in Guangdong expressed as a fraction of the cost for an assembly worker in Taiwan: 1/10

Cost of a group tour to a military base outside Beijing that includes shooting anti-tank missiles: \$500

Average percentage GNP per capita growth rate from 1969 to 1980: 4.1

Average percentage GNP per capita growth rate from 1980 to 1989: 8.2

Percent of total commercial energy provided by coal: 76

Percent increase in carbon emissions in past decade: 60

Chinese carbon emissions expressed as a percentage of Third World total: 37

Domestic output of vehicles in 1991: 63,000

Projected output by the mid-1990s: 600,000

Cost of a Fiat minicar in China: \$6,400

Number of years it would take a worker on an average salary to buy a Fiat minicar: 16

Approximate number of Mercedes Benzes in China: 100

Percent increase in the number of urban households with TVs from 1982 to 1987: 3,500

Chinese settler to Mongol ratio in Mongolia: 10:1

Number of cities with per capita income over \$1,000: 8

Number of pigs in China expressed as percent of world pig population: 60

Number of pigs exported from Hubei province by "labor reform units" in 1989: 481,034

Percent increase in divorces from 1979 to 1988: 100

Compiled by Peng Shuijie

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French: Daniel Jouve, Hong  
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Yoshiaki Kato, Lebanese:  
Ghassan Tufail, Malaysian:  
Dahik Syed Kechik, Norwegian:  
Sleinar Opstad, Philippines:  
Sato Roma, UK: John Burrows,  
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# From Mao to mahjong: The rebirth of Shanghai



BY CHEN GENGTAO  
in Beijing, PRC

**W**ITH A FEW honest words, Zhang Mengxi, 20, won the hearts of the judges of Shanghai's first beauty pageant, held earlier this year.

When asked what she thought was the most urgent problem facing Shanghai, she replied: "Newspapers and TV stations churn out reports on the daily improvements being made to the city's mass transit system, but my personal experience has been of its daily deterioration. Going to work over a relatively short distance takes more than one hour, and buses are always packed to overflowing. I've had my shoes squeezed off and my new dress torn on overcrowded buses."

The judges applauded her response enthusiastically and Zhang went on to win the contest. Her complaint, televised live, struck a chord with fellow Shanghai-layers. Buses and cars often slow to a crawl in the narrow streets of the old city and traffic jams are now common.

But as much as Shanghai-layers hate it, the current traffic problem in the city is a sign of progress. The gridlock is caused by many road-improvement projects and construction of the city's first subway, which has blocked off whole sections of some busy streets.

Like the rest of China, Shanghai is experiencing the benefits—and drawbacks—of a continuing economic reform program that is permanently reshaping the face of China.

Shanghai has been under virtually constant reconstruction since early 1990 when the central government decided to shift its free-enterprise in-

itiative from the southern province of Guangdong to Shanghai with the opening up of Pudong, a 350-square-kilometer area wedged between the city and the East China Sea. The move, intended to revive Shanghai's former glory as the business center of the Far East, has given the city's residents an immense morale boost.

In Pudong, separated from Shanghai by the dock-lined Huangpu River, a commercial zone has been established for business. Farmland there is being snatched up by foreign and domestic investors for workshop and office space. Earlier this year, work was finished on a new bridge linking Pudong and Shanghai, the second-longest suspension bridge in the world. Cars stream over and back between Shanghai and Pudong while more than 10,000 builders work around the clock to finish a bigger bridge downstream.

In the old city, work is about half-finished on the S-shaped 14.4 kilometer subway running through the city center. The Bund, the city's famous 1.5-kilometer riverside road lined with imposing colonial buildings, has been transformed into a 10-lane thoroughfare.

The city's skyline has changed, too, and keeps changing. More than 200 high-rise hotels and office buildings were erected last decade in the cramped city center. The 34-story Park Hotel on famous Nanjing Road, built in 1934, dominated the Shanghai skyline for 49 years until the completion in 1983 of the taller Shanghai Guesthouse. Half of the new high-rises dwarf the old behemoth, with the American-built Portman Hotel towering above them all at a height of 164 meters.

At night, neon lights and brightly lit shop windows illuminate once-deserted streets. Karaoke lounges and bars selling exotic mixed drinks now do a brisk business in this city, the largest in China.

But the changes aren't limited to just the way the city looks. The city's stock exchange has been reborn. The new stock exchange has fueled a frenzy of speculation as novice traders vie for the possibility of making instant riches. Currently, 44 stocks are listed on the exchange with a face value of more than US\$90 million, but their market value has reached more than \$1.8 billion. Daily trading volume averages about \$18 million. An estimated 200,000 Shanghai-layers have plunged into this risky new business, and not always to their benefit. In mini-crashes last May and June, two investors committed suicide after sustaining losses of between \$500 and \$800, prompting government officials and media to warn of the "risk of playing with shares."

Young women sporting high-fashion hairdos and wearing revealing dresses scarcely draw a disapproving glance from passers-by. Gone are the days when the only sign of femininity on a woman was the collar of her print blouse timidly peeking above her uniform or blue coat.

Half a century ago, the city's concentration of foreign capital and businessmen made Shanghai a cosmopolitan and bustling city. At the same time, foreign capital was accused of being a source of exploitation, and foreign capitalists were harangued as bloodsuckers. But now these former exploiters and bloodsuckers are welcomed back with open arms. With national sovereignty now firmly in Chinese hands, these former villains are expected to bring technology, business opportunities and prosperity back to China. The concept of exploitation has long given way to "natural profit-mindedness."

So far, 14 foreign banks have opened offices in the city. By July 1992, foreign investors had established 2,100 joint ventures in the sprawling city, committing a combined investment of \$4.84 billion. Among the big-name investors are: Germany's Volkswagen

(automobiles), America's McDonnell Douglas (passenger aircraft), Xerox (copiers), Britain's Pilkington Brothers (glass), and Belgium's Bell Telephone (digital telephone switches).

Foreign consumer goods are virtually guaranteed to sell well here, the Chinese city with the highest per capita income and whose citizens are more inclined than elsewhere in China to regard foreign goods as superior to domestic ones. Locally made American soft drinks such as Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola and Sprite already dominate the Shanghai market.

When Deng Xiaoping ended China's largely self-imposed isolation, Shanghai-layers were the first to seek opportunities abroad. More than 100,000 of the city's residents, mostly students, are living overseas. The majority of them are studying in the US, Japan and Australia. Every day, lines of visa applicants stretch for several blocks in front of the Japanese and US consulates.

Not all changes transforming the city are to the government's liking. Mahjong playing, which almost invariably involves gambling, has returned to Shanghai with a vengeance. The craze has swept city and countryside alike, disrupting many once harmonious families and driving some desperate losers to steal or rob. Mayor Huang Ju has vowed to eradicate the scourge in two years, but few believe he has any chance of success. To a lesser degree, vices such as prostitution and drug abuse have also returned to the city. Unlike mahjong gambling, the government has been able to contain their spread with repeated crackdowns.

**S**hanghai has never been as exciting as it is these days," says Chen Chun, 45, a writer. "The Cultural Revolution was a hot period with daily upheavals to witness, but it was disruptive and horrible. Today, everyone seems to be excited. People never tire of talking about selling and buying shares. Many workers moonlight by setting up street-side snack stalls at night."

Chen thinks it is all a sign of a renewed spirit among the Shanghai-layers. "At long last people are able to make a few choices for themselves—make decisions and take a little responsibility. Even losers don't regret it."

Nonetheless, it will take more than good intentions to make Shanghai shine again. For too long Shanghai-layers have suffered from a sense of complacency that has worked against them.

"Shanghai-layers have always had too strong a sense of superiority," says Chen Hai, a taxi driver. "They shut themselves within the city limits and didn't deign to learn from others until their economic dominance was eroded by upstarts such as Guangdong and neighboring Jiangsu."

Shanghai-layers' complacency and insularity, it is widely believed, is largely due to the days of planned economy. For too long the city got fat off the state in return for increased production from its huge work force. To this day, Shanghai still has the largest concentration of state enterprises in China. In the 1970s, Shanghai contributions accounted for one-eighth of state coffers. Shanghai was ensured cheap raw materials and government help in selling whatever it produced. When market reform cut the supply of cheap raw materials and compelled local manufacturers to find their own markets, complacency turned into bitterness. Now the concentration of state enterprises which were a boon yesterday are a burden as the state scales back protection of state-run firms.

In early June 1989, student demonstrations brought the city's public transport to a standstill for four days. With then Mayor Zhu Rongji handling the situation

at the top by day and 100,000 workers dismantling road barriers by night, the city emerged from the worst turmoil since the Cultural Revolution largely unscathed. The worst incident, which took place on June 6, involved the burning of a passenger train. Three arsonists were later sentenced to death.

But leftist radicalism has deep roots here, too. Mao Zedong fired the first shots of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) from Shanghai by directing a media assault on his opponents in Beijing. Three members of the notorious Gang of Four, headed by Mao's wife, had their home base in the city. In the leftist purges during the Cultural Revolution, some 200,000 people, mostly intellectuals, were persecuted and more than 100 were beaten to death or committed suicide.

Deng Xiaoping has always admonished his countrymen to look forward instead of backward. Today, more than ever, he needs to help Shanghai out of stagnation if he wants his nationwide reform to succeed. Hence, the opening of Pudong and a series of liberalizing policies granted to the city in the last couple of years. Shanghai is too important to be ignored. With a population of 13 million, the city has been the country's economic powerhouse.

In the meantime, Shanghai faces daunting problems in its march toward modernization. Traffic jams will not go away any time soon. Even with a sizable increase in per capita housing space projected by the end of the century, Shanghai will remain the most densely populated city in China. High levels of pollution remain a serious threat. The water of Suzhou Creek cutting through the city is black and foul-smelling in the summer, and this will not change until a World Bank-financed sewage diversion project (to the Yangtze estuary) is completed some time in 1993.

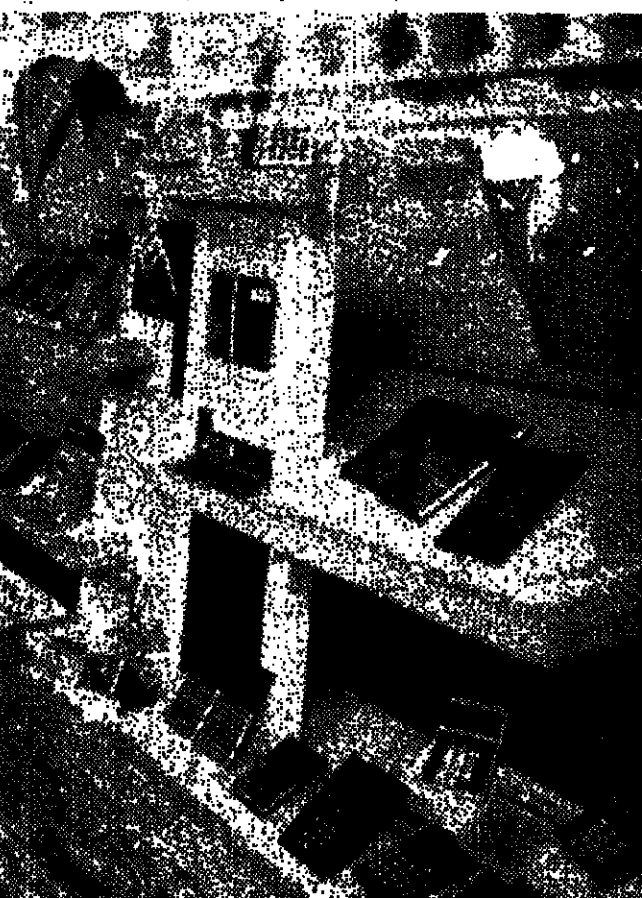
But Shanghai's most serious obstacle may be the mind-set of its people. True, Shanghai-layers on the average are the best educated in China, and while many of them have regained their enterprising spirit, most have yet to learn from their daring Cantonese rivals.

One taxi driver described the typical old Shanghai-layers mind-set this way: "A couple of years ago, Shanghai truck drivers coming home from the provinces would tell friends, 'You enter a capitalist country once you are outside Shanghai, and you come back to a socialist one upon your return.' This shows

what an outdated mind-set many Shanghai-layers still have."

Two months ago, a local fashion designer applied to register her private company under her own well-known name and was rejected by the official agency in charge. The reason: no precedent. Approval was not given until the media poured scorn on the agency responsible for rejecting her.

Leftism is fast losing ground to pragmatism in this great city. When its people fully regain their enterprising spirit, Shanghai will once again lead the nation as the engine of economic growth. ♦



(Above) Old and new Shanghai: A junk sails on the Huangpu River, in the background towering cranes show the other face of the city. (Below) Shanghai in earlier, traffic-free days before the Bund, the riverside roadway, was converted into a 10-lane highway. (Opposite page) Images of the hustle and bustle of China's largest city and a popular Shanghai pastime, window-shopping along busy streets.

Chen Gengtao is executive editor of China Features, which is affiliated with Xinhua.



## BOOMING CHINA

## Hong Kong's silent partner

Reunification with China now seen as a boon

BY ERIC STONE  
in Hong Kong

SOMETHING very strange happened during the first six months of 1992. Economically, Hong Kong's 1997 reunification with China became an advantage rather than a disadvantage.

During the past 10 years of reform in China, Hong Kong has been the driving force behind the tremendous economic development of Guangdong province across the border. Now, in some ways, the roles have reversed with Guangdong fuelling Hong Kong's economy.

Between two and four million Chinese laborers in Guangdong work for Hong

Kong companies. The relocation of most of Hong Kong's factories to China is just about complete and Hong Kong has become one of the world's major re-exporters. But that's old news.

What is new is the quickening pace of the integration of Hong Kong and southern China's economies on a much broader scale than ever before. Chinese companies listed on Hong Kong's stock exchange are some of the hottest stocks going. Hong Kong companies are being judged on the strength of their ties to China. The preferred currency of exchange in southern China is the Hong Kong dollar; estimates of the amount of Hong Kong money in circulation over the

border run as high as 20 percent.

Hong Kong companies are actively courting Chinese equity participation. The recent purchase of Hongkong Bank's 10 percent stake in Cathay Pacific Airways by China National Aviation and China Travel Service is a good example. Hongkong Bank, the territory's pre-eminent financial institution, no longer owns any part of the territory's flag airline, while mainland Chinese interests now hold almost one-quarter of Cathay Pacific.

By the end of June of this year, Chinese investment in Hong Kong property totalled about US\$2.3 billion. While this amounts to only 3 percent of the territory's total real estate market, if current trends continue China will soon be one of the major landlords in the central district.

But closer and broader integration with China has a downside as well. Hong Kong is more vulnerable than ever to any politically inspired deterioration in trade relations between China and the US. The US remains, after China, Hong Kong's most important market. Since China's most-favored-nation trading status with the US is under constant threat and review, Hong Kong is always in the vulnerable position of becoming a wounded innocent bystander.

Politics in Hong Kong are also becoming more complex. The 18 directly elected legislators are making more noise within the government than the territory has ever experienced. The days of Hong Kong being governed by consensus within a solid front are well

Eric Stone is the deputy editor of the Hong Kong-based monthly, *Asian Business*.

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Môžu sa aj stredoeurópske krajiny stať "tigrami"?



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## An unlikely dissident

Journalist says reforms are more than democracy

DAI XING IS NOT your average dissident. A writer for the Beijing-based *Guang Ming Daily*, Dai was arrested after the events of June 1989 for supporting the Tiananmen Square demonstrators, a charge she finds ridiculous: "I didn't have any contact with them and I didn't even approve of the demonstration." Nonetheless, she served 10 months in Qing Chen prison and was barred thereafter from working for any political media.

Perhaps the authorities had another "crime" in mind when she was arrested. Before the events in Tiananmen Square, Dai had become well known for writing a book that was highly critical of the Three Gorges Project, an extremely controversial plan (even by official standards) to erect a massive hydroelectric dam on the Yangtze River (See "China's colossal gamble on the Yangtze" *The WorldPaper*, October 1992).

## BOOMING CHINA

and truly over. This makes dealing with China over political matters, such as calls for further democratization in Hong Kong, and over political-economic matters, such as the financing of the new airport, more difficult than ever. The appointment of Chris Patten, a savvy politician rather than a career diplomat, to the post of governor of Hong Kong can be seen as recognition of the increasingly delicate political nature of the job.

The transient nature of Hong Kong society and the increasing ease of crossing the border with China (legally and illegally) are not generally positive forces in Hong Kong. Crime continues to be a growth industry, and corruption and unethical business practices are making something of a comeback after having been suppressed, at least temporarily, by the Internal Commission Against Corruption.

While in the past the use of guns was rare, it is now becoming all-too common. Hong Kong, which was founded on smuggling, is returning to its roots with lucrative enthusiasm; criminal gangs are adding generously to their coffers by delivering stolen cars, untaxed appliances and other luxury goods up-river to China.

Tourists and products to and from China that pass through Hong Kong are perhaps the most significant contributors to the territory's economy. Tourism is the third largest cash generator in Hong Kong and re-exports have far outstripped direct exports over the past five years. Re-exports will probably continue to rise and tourism will decline.

Re-exports will rise for the simple reason of China's booming economy. China will produce and buy more and



Fast and furious trading at Hong Kong's Chinese Gold and Silver Exchange.

many of these products will pass through Hong Kong. It is only the re-exports which move between China and Taiwan through Hong Kong that will decline because some time in the next few years the two countries are expected to open direct trade links.

Overall tourism will decline for several reasons, chief among them being that China is likely to begin aggressively promoting Shanghai and Beijing as points of entry into the country. New air routes

crossing the former Soviet Union mean that European tourists in particular are less likely than in the past to pass through Hong Kong on their way to China.

However, because of the booming economy in China, there will be more business travelers. As the business and financial service center for China, Hong Kong will naturally attract more business travelers.

In 10 years, Hong Kong won't even necessarily be the most advanced city

in China. Shenzhen, which has for all intents and purposes become a suburb of Hong Kong, is already on the verge of catching up; Guangzhou will have caught up by then and possibly Xiamen. Beijing will be well on its way to catching up with Hong Kong, too. In 20 to 30 years, Shanghai, Chengdu and several other cities could be added to this list.

Hong Kong will be China's financial center, but won't remain the most important financial center in Asia Pacific. This will happen regardless of the economy in China since telecommunications are quickly making the need for regional financial centers obsolete.

No matter who's in charge, China is well on its way to developing into a country that is something like an enormous version of Singapore: an authoritarian state with a population lulled into complacency by easy access to consumer goods and a comparatively (within living memory) high standard of living.

There is a great deal of talk these days in China about learning from Singapore. China will never be a Western-style democracy. In Hong Kong, where under British rule people have enjoyed civil liberties but not democracy, there will be an erosion of these freedoms, largely self-imposed through a desire not to rock the boat.

The economic assimilation of Hong Kong into China is already complete. Technically speaking, the political assimilation will occur at midnight on June 30, 1997. The cultural assimilation is ongoing from both sides of the border and within a generation visitors to Hong Kong will shake their heads in disbelief that it was ever anything other than just a major city in China. ♦

Q. How is economic reform possible without democratization?

A. Keep in mind that the reforms began in 1978 as a purely economic move limited to the countryside. China is still an agricultural society, with about 800 million people living in rural areas. Giving these people the right to decide what to grow on the land, allowing them to sell their products on the free market, to run little factories and workshops and to work in nearby cities was a revolutionary step. Then Prime Minister Zhao Zhi Yang wanted these reforms to include the cities, but the old guard in the party leadership did not agree.

Economics and politics are like a bird in a cage. If the bird grows too big, the cage must be opened or it will break. Deng Xiaoping believes that if the economy changes, everything else must change—but gradually. Reforms have been limited because such is the balance of power. Officially, the Four Principles (Tenets of the Communist Party: leadership of the party, the socialist system, the power of the proletariat and Marxism-Leninism) have not been touched. Like dividing a bowl of rice, Deng gave his opponents the army, the media, and the constitution, keeping the economy for himself, knowing that if you give the farmer his own rice and some freedom, everything else will change.

Q. Why, then, did the students revolt? Why didn't you support them?

port them?

A. Tiananmen was not about human rights and democracy. Deng never speaks about democracy. This is a problem for Chinese intellectuals. There is a constant discussion going on over what needs to be done: Shall we support Deng's partial reforms or follow the example of Taiwan, where economic progress has been achieved under an autocratic regime? Taiwan only recently lifted the ban on opposition political parties and independent newspapers.

The students who took to the streets did so because they lost guidance and became restless. And many who supported the students did so for economic, not political reasons. After Tiananmen, reform slowed down for more than two years, with Deng himself moving to southern China, where he is more at home. It was only this spring that he and the reformists prevailed again. The system is still totalitarian, with police surveillance preventing any independent political life. There is very little opposition in China. Among those of the independent intelligentsia, the prevailing view after Tiananmen is that we need to support Deng when he's right and criticize him when he's wrong.

Q. And you support Deng, despite having been imprisoned?

A. Yes. Despite the fact that I was not originally allowed to come to the US

and that this summer on my way back to China I was detained at the airport in Hong Kong by Chinese Airline functionaries before being allowed to proceed to Beijing. I believe Deng opened the door, but no one can chart the exact path China will pursue, only the general direction. We have to support Deng, he is the only great man that we have. He is greater than Mao and even greater than Sun Yat-sen.

Deng is putting the quality of living conditions ahead of human rights, assuming that human rights and equality of rights will follow. People who supported the Tiananmen demonstrators did not care about human rights. They were defending the egalitarian society against the inequality caused by economic reform. Not many care for democracy in China. Even the students who seem to have all the answers don't know enough about democracy. If Prime Minister Li Peng were to give them democracy by decree, telling them: "Here's democracy, you can have it," they wouldn't know what to do with it.

Q. Are you going to write about these unpopular truths after your return to China later this year?

A. As I said, I hope to work for the *Guang Ming Daily* again. "Guang Ming" means "bright." In 1989, the students carried a sign that read: "Bright paper is not bright." I hope there will be no need for such a sign in the future. ♦



Dai is currently studying at Harvard University as a fellow at the Nieman Foundation, a program for distinguished journalists. She plans to return to China next year and continue her work as a journalist. She recently spoke with *David Pessen*, editor of *The WorldPaper*, on reform in China today.



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## Dave Barry Does Japan: Part Two Adapting to an exotic culture, or fun with fugu

By Dave Barry

I TOOK an immediate liking to the Japanese culture, because it has a fascinating and wonderful quality that for want of a better term I will call: "lack of height." I have read that, on the average, the Japanese are getting taller, but at the moment they seem to be about the same height as junior-high-school students.

Throughout my adult life, I have described myself as being "about six feet tall." Growing up, I was always one of the smaller, punier boys. But in Japan I was big. I started noticing as soon as we got off the plane. We were walking through a crowded airport concourse, and I realized that I could look over the top of everybody else's head.

This was a recurring observation of mine for the entire time we were in Japan. We'd be in some beautiful temple, or an important museum, and Beth and Robby would be having significant cultural insights, and I'd be saying: "Hey! I'm the tallest person in this temple or museum!"

I'll get the bad news out of the way right up front: Tokyo is ugly. It looks like it was hit by an anti-charm missile. It had the bad fortune of being almost entirely rebuilt after World War II, during what architectural historians refer to as the "Age of Making Everything Look Like a Municipal Parking Garage, But Without the Warmth."

And it goes on for miles. Tokyo is huge. Something like 15 million people live there, and I would estimate that at any moment, 14.7 million of them are lost. This is because the Tokyo street system holds the world outdoor record for randomness. A map of Tokyo looks like a tub of hyperactive bait. There is virtually no street that goes directly from anywhere to anywhere.

Adding to the excitement is the fact that almost none of the streets have names. You think I'm kidding, right? Look at a map of Tokyo. Look at a detailed map. Look for street names. There are hardly any. This is one of the biggest, busiest, most important cities in the world, and most of the streets don't have names.

But wait! There's more! On these streets without names, there are buildings with meaningless numbers! Yes! Number 17 could be right next door to Number 341, which could be miles from Number 342!

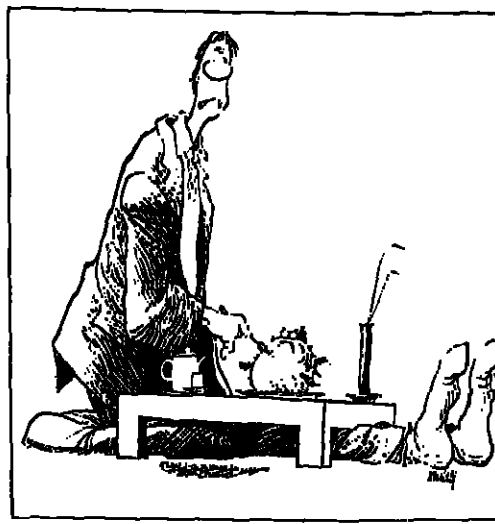
So getting to an unfamiliar destination in Tokyo is basically a matter of going on a Treasure Hunt From Hell, especially if you don't speak or read Japanese.

We couldn't take many taxis in Tokyo, because we had no way to tell the drivers where we wanted to go. We often rode the subways, which are (of course) clean and efficient, but sometimes very crowded. No doubt you've seen photos of Japanese subway workers shoving commuters into a subway car that's already visibly bulging. Of course subway workers would never try a stunt like that in the U.S. But the Japanese tend to be far more cooperative and docile and group-oriented.

At times it seemed as though the entire population of Tokyo already was wearing matching outfits. All the men seemed to be wearing dark suits, white shirts, and dark ties. All the women

seemed to be wearing darkish conservative dresses, often with hats and high heels. All the children seemed to be wearing some kind of school uniform. It was like a giant funeral. We didn't wear particularly casual clothes over there, but I always felt like The Hippie Tourist. Not that anybody ever said anything. Nobody ever hassled us about anything in Japan, but people always noticed us, frankly because we were different, and I think the Japanese find being different fascinating, because it's the one thing, above all, that they're raised not to be.

I certainly would never say anything judgmental about another culture, but in certain food-related areas, the Japanese are clinically insane. The new culinary rage when we were in Japan was to eat fish that were still alive. People pay top yen in fine Tokyo restaurants for live, gasp-



ing fish. The waiter brings you your fish, still gasping, then quickly slices it open right at your table, then you're supposed

to eat it while the fish is staring at you with a facial expression that says, "Go ahead and enjoy yourself! Don't mind me! I'll be dead fairly soon!"

And that's not the weirdest culinary activity that the Japanese engage in. There is also a kind of blowfish that the

Japanese eat raw. So far, you are not surprised. You are saying: "Big deal, the Japanese eat a lot of raw fish." Well, what you are

apparently not aware of is that fugu contains an extremely lethal poison. It's the Blowfish of Doom. The liver of the male and ovaries of the female contain one of the most toxic substances in nature, for which there is no antidote, which means that if your fugu is not prepared exactly right, with all of the dangerous organs removed, you are soon going to meet the Big Maitre d' In the Sky.

Clearly this is a fish that Mother Nature is telling us we should leave underwater, but to the Japanese it is a great delicacy. Every year they eat tons of it. They'll pay the equivalent of hundreds of dollars to eat it, and every year several people die because their fugu was prepared wrong. I think one useful Japanese phrase they should include in the tourist guidebooks is: Does this particular dish kill you if prepared improperly? ■

# FRENCH WEEK

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## SAFEWAY

سيفوي

مخطة واحدة للتسوق



By David Schulmann

FOR OVER 700 years, medieval Spain was the scene of sporadic conflicts involving Jews, Muslims and Christians. Yet in spite of distrust, discord and endemic quarrelling, members of the three religious groups engaged in fruitful business, exchanged ideas and shared culture. Art, architecture, literature, science and daily life reflected this complex common experience.

Five hundred years after the end of this period, the Jewish Museum is presenting *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims and Christians in Medieval Spain* at The New-York Historical Society until December. The exhibition examines cultural inter-relationships among Jews, Muslims and Christians in the centuries from the Muslim conquest of Spain in 711 to the defeat of the last Muslim ruler and the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims in 1492.

Over 100 objects are on show, including rare and beautiful medieval manuscripts, textiles, architectural fragments, ceramics and metalwork.

*Convivencia* is a Spanish term used to describe the coexistence or living together of the three major Iberian religious groups. In terms of the cultural history of this part of Europe, *Convivencia* has also been cited as a notable instance of productive interchange amidst conflict and crisis.

As Thomas Glick observes in an introductory note to the accompanying catalog, "*Convivencia*... must encompass the ability of persons of different ethnic groups to step out of their ethnically bound roles in order to interact on a par with members of competing groups."

He cites the example of Mudejars (Muslims living under Christian rule) who were recruited as soldiers in spite of their ethnic origin.

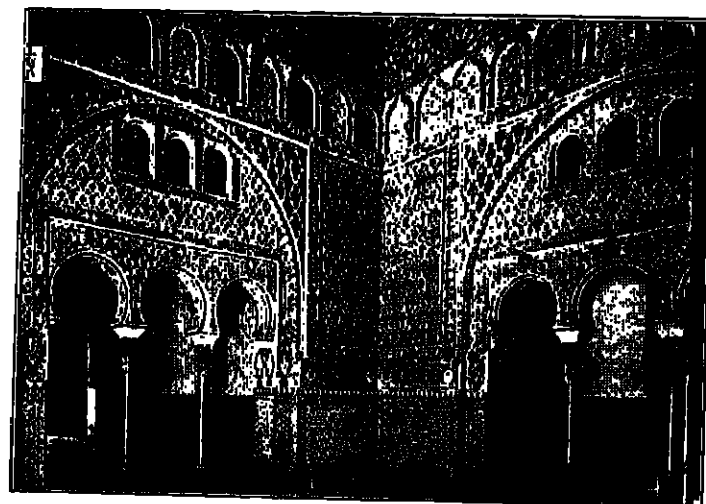
Many of the works in the exhibition were made by and for the Jewish and Muslim communities of medieval Spain, communities that lost most of their material culture upon being expelled in 1492. Included are extremely rare objects such as two 14th-century lamps used during the Jewish Hanukkah festival and pieces of stucco and tile decoration from the Alhambra.

An outstanding example of medieval art is a 14th-century synagogue carpet which bears both a Jewish motif and a Kufic inscription praising Allah. It is the oldest surviving carpet from medieval Spain.

Leaves from the first illustrated Hagadah (the Talmud section dealing with the Exodus), printed in Spain in the late 15th century, provide an interesting example of cultural creativity during the years prior to the expulsion of Jews from the Iberian peninsula. Many of the Jews received sanctuary in the Ottoman empire and, to this day, thrive in the economic sector of modern Turkey.

Convivencia:

## Seven hundred years of creativity in harmony



Interior of Palacio del Rey Pedro in Seville

A particularly beautiful example of a Hebrew Bible, c. 1460, preserves motifs first developed in the stucco decoration of Muslim architecture. Other manuscripts with abstract decorations are likewise based on Muslim art and clearly demonstrate the interaction of cultures characteristic of medieval Spain.

One of the earliest works in the exhibition is the fragment of a 10th century Islamic sundial, found in Cordoba, which was

used to determine the five times of daily prayer. A most striking example of *Convivencia* was the Jewish, Muslim and Christian participation in the development of science.

Particularly important are manuscripts on science like the *Libro del Saber de Astronomia* of Alfonso X, the Wise (1252-84), a compendium of scientific treatises, most of them by Jewish scientists, produced under the patronage of Alfonso.

Academic File

Also included are three Spanish astrolabes, instruments for determining latitude: One with Latin star names, a second with Arabic inscriptions and the third with Hebrew names, which attest to the dynamic intellectual activity of the three groups.

In *Excelsis Dei Thesaurus* (called "Vidal Mayor"), an exquisitely illuminated law code commissioned by King James I of Aragon in 1247, depicts Jews, Muslims and Christians in several of its miniatures, indicating that the King's law applied to all three religious groups. An 11th-century, intricately carved ivory casket depicts humans drinking or playing music in a garden, birds, leaves and animals. For Muslims, the garden was the location for intellectual and social gatherings and also symbolized paradise.

There are only three extant medieval synagogues in Spain and the Jewish Museum borrowed decorative elements from two of them: The Cordoba synagogue and El Transito, Toledo. These will be compared with similar decorations from Christian and Islamic buildings like the Las Dueñas convent in Cordoba and the renowned Islamic palace of the Alhambra in Granada, demonstrating the shared architectural vocabulary and compositions of all three groups.

Regarded in retrospect as the "Golden Age," *Convivencia* marked an extraordinary period in Spain's history, when the country's three major religious communities mistrusted each other and were often at war with each other, yet engaged in mutual business and creativity, which was to leave a rich legacy of culture.

## Forever fascinating: Central Asia revisited

By Naseem Abdallah

WASHINGTON — "FOR the last of knowing what should not be known," travellers and poets have made their journeys, real and imagined, to 'divine Bukhara and happy Samarkand'.

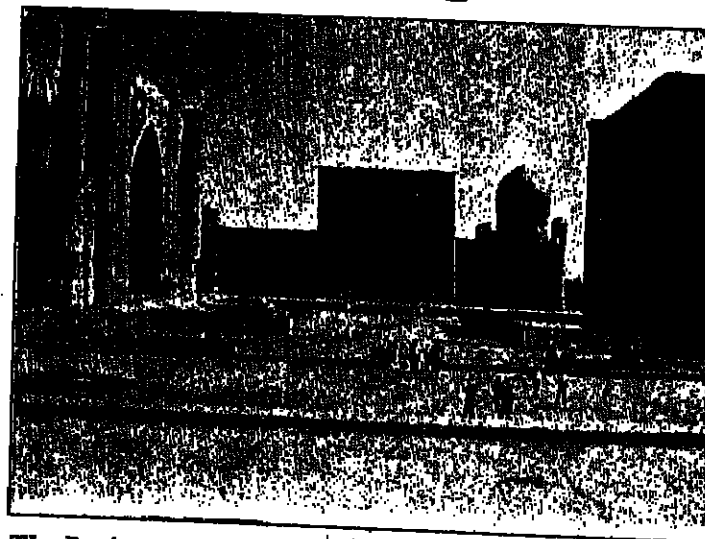
If the British poet James Elroy Flecker, whose poem has become synonymous with the Central Asian cities, were alive today he most certainly would have set out on his *Golden Journey To Samarkand*.

For centuries the cities have fired the imagination of travellers and writers — even of those who never visited them.

Marco Polo, who passed through these cities in the 13th century, marvelled at their grandeur. British poets and writers like Marlowe, Milton, Keats and Kipling have all taken flights of fantasy through the 'silken' route. Oscar Wilde got completely carried away and ignored all facts of botany. He wrote of 'Bukhara where red lilies blow'.

Both cities were closed to non-Muslims in the 19th century but yet they continued to fascinate those who heard of their glorious past.

Mosques and *madrasahs* were the centers of Islamic learning and tradition in Bukhara, but the city which once boasted of having a different mosque for each day of the year to pray in was left with only one *madrasah* and a handful of mosques when the communists overthrew the feudal rulers in 1920.



The Registan Square in Samarkand

Samarkand, with its famous Muslim landmarks like the Registan Square, was also cut off from the outside world during the communist clampdown when the whole of Central Asia was closed to foreigners. But the legends of these two cities persisted and are being revived against the backdrop of political and social changes that are taking place in the region.

With the world embroiled in major ethnic problems Bukhara has once again emerged from behind the walls of inaccessibility to display the startling mix of peoples who have inhabited the city for centuries.

Uzbeks, Tajiks, Jews, Arabs, Russians, Indians, Turkmen, Persians, Afghans and Chinese have all made their mark on the culture and economic aspects of the city.

One of several oases along the famous Silk Route which linked Europe with East Asia, Bukhara was a major market center for carpets and textiles. In this cosmopolitan society, cloth and clothing became a means of visual communication, used to convey information regarding a person's status, religious affiliation and level of wealth.

With the sweeping reforms brought about by Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of glasnost in the late 1980s many of the mosques and schools of religion were reopened. Having kept their traditions alive in secrecy, continuing them with greater openness was difficult but not impossible. The Central Asians' success in main-

taining a cultural identity under enormous hardship is now being applauded in different parts of the world with shows and exhibitions from Central Asia's two most famous cities.

Earlier this year, the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris put on show the intricate pottery produced in Samarkand. The exhibition, entitled *Terres Secrètes de Samarkand* (Secret Lands of Samarkand) opened in June and generated great interest from the cross-section of people who live in the French capital.

Another exhibition at the Textile Museum in Washington re-rooted the ethnically diverse heritage of Central Asia, little known to the outside world for much of the 20th century. *Bukhara: Traditional Weavings from Pre-Soviet Central Asia* presented 20 boldly patterned hangings, garments and carpets selected from the museum's collections.

These turn-of-the-century silks and carpets, created in or around the city of Bukhara in present-day Uzbekistan highlight three characteristic forms of textile art from the Bukhara region. They represent three distinct textile technologies, each reflecting the origins of the people who use them — ikat dyeing, pile carpet weaving and embroidery.

Designs of the vibrant silk wall hangings (*pardah*) and robes (*khalat*) which were on show obtain their characteristic blurred edges from the ikat dyeing process which has its roots in India, and are witness to the contribu-

tion made by the Hindus who settled in the region.

This colourful ikat cloth, generally woven in long narrow strips, was available commercially in 19th-century Bukhara and was used for a variety of purposes. Ikat robes were given as gifts of honor, bestowed upon selected individuals by members of the ruling aristocracy.

The Turkish-speaking republics of Central Asia — Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, boast rich textile traditions. Bukhara has been a major rug trading center for centuries and rugs from surrounding areas which were traded in Bukhara came to be named after the city.

Locally produced rugs of the 19th century, sometimes called *Ersari-Beshir*, themselves betray Bukhara's position as a trading center, exhibiting the influence of both rural and urban design traditions of the region and the cross-influences of the different cultures that exist there. The pile weavings selected for the exhibition have designs which were possibly derived from ikat patterns.

Carol Blar, curator of the Eastern Hemisphere Collections at The Textile Museum, believes that against the backdrop of current events in Central Asia, the exhibition provided one means of further understanding and appreciating the peoples and cultures of Central Asia as they emerge from the shadow of the Soviet Union.

Academic File

## The Star's TV GUIDE

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## ENGLISH PROGRAM

## SATURDAY

8:30 — America's Funniest Home Videos  
9:00 — Perspective  
9:30 — Saturday Variety Show  
10:00 — News in English  
10:20 — Feature Film, 'Evidence of Power'. Starring Gordon Jump. A student of criminology works in his summer vacation on solving the mystery of a series of murders in a small town.

## SUNDAY

8:30 — Family Matters  
9:10 — Documentary, National Geographic Special, 'Elephants'  
10:00 — News in English  
10:20 — Law and Order

## MONDAY

8:30 — Silks  
9:10 — A Fine Romance  
10:00 — News in English  
10:20 — Touch and Die. A powerful drama about a journalist who uncovers a worldwide nuclear cartel.

## TUESDAY

8:30 — The Golden Girls  
9:30 — Malignant  
10:00 — News in English  
10:20 — When the Lion Roars

## WEDNESDAY

8:30 — Saved By The Bell  
9:00 — Spot Light  
9:10 — Cuedo  
10:00 — News in English  
10:20 — The Cowra Breakout

## THURSDAY

8:30 — Uncle Buck  
9:10 — Civil Wars  
10:00 — News in English  
10:20 — Movie of the Week, 'Margaret Bourke White'. Starring Farrah Fawcett and Fredrick Forrest. The true story of a daring woman photographer who dares to go places where no man has.

## FRIDAY

8:30 — Too Close for Comfort  
9:10 — Nonni and Manni

## FRENCH PROGRAM

## SAMEDI

6:05 — Les Aventures du Bosco  
6:25 — Envoyé Spécial  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Fenêtre Sur

## DIMANCHE

5:30 — Rêves D'Enfants  
5:37 — Jeux Sans Frontières  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Le Journal de L'Histoire

## LUNDI

6:00 — Pif et Hercule  
6:10 — Les Chevaliers du Ciel  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Magazine Sportif

## MARDI

6:06 — Michel Vaillant  
6:30 — La Famille Ramdan  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Obsidienne

## MERCREDI

6:00 — Des Trains pas comme les autres  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Variétés

## JEUDI

5:30 — Au Plaisir de Dieu  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Les Images de L'Histoire

## VENDREDI

5:30 — La Raison D'Etat  
7:00 — News in French  
7:15 — Variétés



Michael Gambon stars as Malignant, Tuesday 9.30

## Top Pop Albums

1. Erotica, Madonna, Warner Bros.
2. Unplugged, Eric Clapton, Reprise
3. Automatic for the People, REM, Warner Bros.
4. The New Prince Album, Prince and the NPG, Warner Bros.
5. Timeless (The Classics), Michael Bolton, Columbia
6. Ten, Pearl Jam, Epic
7. Us, Peter Gabriel, Geffen
8. Dirty Alice in Chains, Columbia
9. What's the 411?, Mary J. Blige, Uptown
10. Boomerang, Soundtrack, Arista

## Top Video Rentals

1. Basic Instinct, Michael Douglas, Sharon Stone, Live Home Video
2. My Cousin Vinny, Joe Pesci, Marisa Tomei, Fox Video
3. Fried Green Tomatoes, Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, MCA/Universal Home Video
4. Thunderheart, Val Kilmer, Fred Ward, Columbia TriStar Home Video
5. Beethoven, Charles Grodin, Bonnie Hunt, MCA/Universal Home Video
6. White Men Can't Jump, Woody Harrelson, Wesley Snipes, Fox Video
7. Final Analysis, Richard Gere, Kim Basinger, Warner Home Video
8. Medicine Man, Sean Connery, Lorraine Bracco, Hollywood Home Video
9. The Lawnmower Man, Pierce Brosnan, Jeff Fahey, Columbia TriStar Home Video
10. White Sands, Willem Dafoe, Mickey Rourke, Warner Home Video

## HOROSCOPE

★★★★★★★★★

Weekly Tip: Monday, mum's the word. Don't even ask questions in class. Concentrate on doing the work.

ARIES (21 March-19 April): Don't believe everything you hear. A rumor could be misleading.

TAURUS (20 April-20 May): You should be able to get a lot done. Seeing family again will put you in excellent shape.

GEMINI (21 May-20 June): A co-worker may not do his or her share of the work. Make sure before you get in to a tough spot.

CANCER (21 June-22 July): Romance may get in the way of your ability to pay attention. A powerful force is at work.

LEO (23 July-22 August): You may find it hard to get much done, unless you go along with domestic pressures.

VIRGO (23 August-22 October): You'll soak up information. Cram as much work as you can into every day.

LIBRA (23 September-22 October): Hold onto your money. Sell, don't buy. Be similarly conservative with your opinions. An old domestic conflict could pop up.

SCORPIO (23 October-21 November): You'll get just about whatever you want. Ask for it, and don't leave any room for doubt.

SAGITTARIUS (22 November-21 December): Although you're feeling great, watch what you say. You could be misunderstood.

CAPRICORN (22 December-19 January): Attend a club meeting and you'll get the inside scoop. That's also a good time to work with a group of people.

AQUARIUS (20 January-18 February): You may feel kind of sluggish. You probably aren't coming down with a cold, but take precautions anyway.

PISCES (19 February-20 March): Contact with a friend who comes from far away will be valuable. Be careful with your work.

## Dining Out

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# Le Jourdain

Section française du Star

Reportage

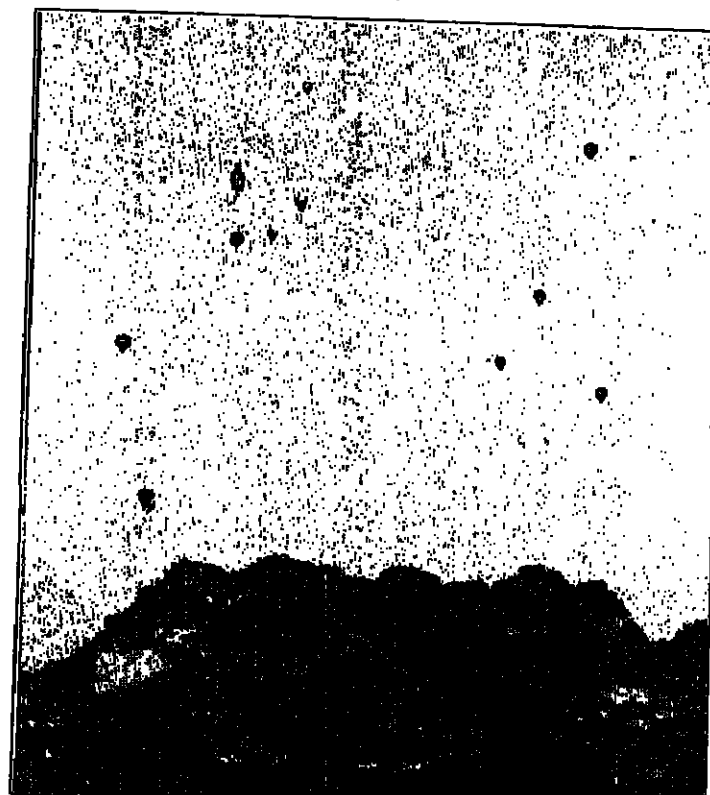
## Les ballons du désert

Un ballet de montgolfières a enchanté, cette semaine, les paysages surnaturels de Wadi Rum. Quatre équipes françaises se sont réservé un carré de ciel bleu

UNE MANIFESTATION exceptionnelle dans un site exceptionnel. Tel est le commentaire des spectateurs. Cette compétition, il est vrai, ne manque ni de charme ni d'originalité. C'est une grande première au Moyen-Orient. Cinquante-et-un ballons se disputent pendant quatre jours, la première place d'une course prestigieuse, dans le ciel toujours bleu du sud de la Jordanie. À condition que la chance soit au rendez-vous: dimanche après-midi, premier jour ouvert au grand public, un vent fort a cloué les ballons au sol! Au grand dam des nombreux aficionados venus de toute la Jordanie, pour rêver devant ces drôles d'oiseaux du désert.

Cette compétition ne compte pas pour le Championnat du monde. Pourtant, les quatre-vingts meilleurs pilotes de la spécialité avaient leurs noms, inscrits noir sur blanc sur la liste des participants. Quatre équipes françaises ont pris le départ. Pour la plupart, les concurrents ne sont pas des professionnels. "C'est avant tout une passion", selon Jean Becker, pilote d'un ballon tricolore. "Dans notre équipe, il y a un tapissier, un dessinateur, un agent de voyage et moi-même, journaliste. A priori, rien à voir avec les ballons", s'exclame-t-il. La majorité des pilotes présents à Wadi Rum sont des vieux routiers de la montgolfière. Leurs carnets de vol affichent plus de 1.000 heures.

Un premier départ hors compétition est donné samedi matin, à l'occasion de l'anniversaire du roi Hussein. Le parcours est composé de personnalités locales, de corps diplomatiques et de journalistes venus du monde entier. Début de la course. Huit vols sont au programme. Des vols de précision, exigeant une bonne utilisation des vents et de l'espace. "Une des épreuves consiste à faire tomber un ruban jésé de 70 grammes à moins de vingt mètres d'une cible, explique Jean Becker, malheureusement, notre ruban n'est pas arrivé dans les limites imposées. Nous n'avons pas été classés".



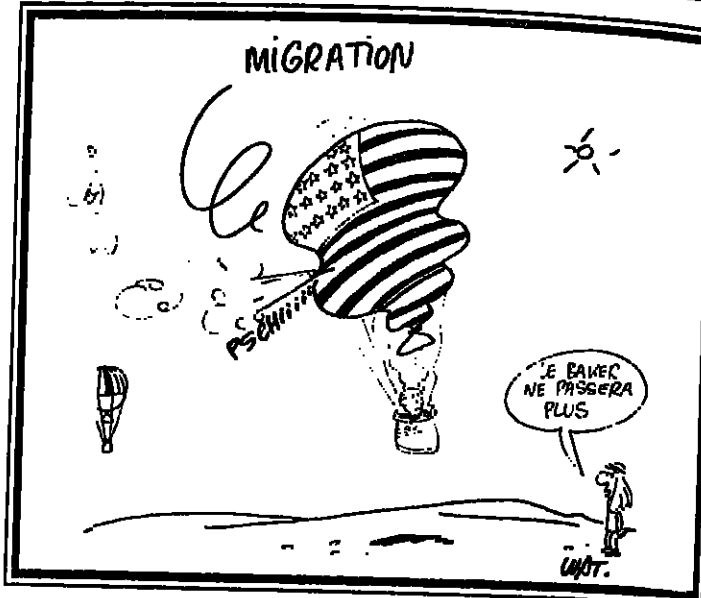
Ballet de ballons sur fond de Wadi Rum

Au programme de la compétition: "Le retour au bercail". Il s'agit de décoller d'un endroit choisi, de voler cinq à six kilomètres avant de revenir au lieu de rassemblement. Le tout dans un temps imposé. Une autre épreuve, particulièrement délicate, consiste à parcourir en une heure la distance la plus courte possible. Une connaissance parfaite de la force et de la direction des vents est primordiale pour la réussite.

Malgré quelques problèmes d'intendance, les équipes présentes semblent satisfaites de leur séjour dans le ciel de Jordanie. "Cette compétition dans un tel site est exceptionnelle, survoler ce désert de sable peuplé de montagnes est une expérience unique. C'est également un lieu marqué par l'histoire: on a l'impression de suivre les traces de Lawrence d'Arabie", affirme Jean Becker. Cette équipe française, spon-

sorisée par une société alsacienne d'import-export, est émerveillée par l'accueil qu'on lui réserve. "Depuis notre arrivée dans le désert, nous sommes sans cesse invités par des gens des environs. Nous avons beaucoup voyagé, mais nous avons rarement vu ça", confie Frédéric Cugari, membre de l'équipe du ballon Polymix numéro 37. Enthousiasmés par leur expérience de Wadi Rum, ils comptent, dès la fin de la compétition, partir à l'aventure. Ils veulent visiter la Jordanie dans tous ses coins et recoins avant de retrouver la grisaille et la routine françaises. Jean Becker, organisateur du championnat d'Europe de Belfort (France) en septembre dernier, n'oubliera pas de siôt cette "expédition fantastique". Une chose est certaine: il reviendra dans la région, avec ou sans ballon. ■

Michèle Rieux



## Ce soir au Marriott 21h30 Christian Escoudé, jazzman frenchy

LES JOURNAUX et magazines français ne tarissent pas d'éloges lorsqu'ils parlent de Christian Escoudé. "Éblouissant, à faire pâlir plus d'un confrère américain" écrit Rock and Folk. Pour Jazz Magazine, "sa place est indéniablement au tout premier rang des guitaristes actuels". "Un langage est en train de se construire", ose Télérama. Mais quel est ce personnage très très étrange? C'est sans nul doute l'un des guitaristes les plus inventifs du Jazz français. Fiche signalétique: Christian Escoudé, né en 1947, a appris à jouer de son instrument favori dès l'âge de 10 ans. Cinq ans plus tard, ses professeurs (son père et son oncle) lancent dans sa direction un regard admiratif. Leur jeune élève est déjà professionnel. Il joue dans les bases américaines de la région d'Angoulême.

Ses maîtres? Ce sont les plus grands sur la scène de la guitare Jazz: Tal Farlow ou Django Reinhardt. Depuis 1978, il participe chaque année au festival de Samois, organisé en hommage à Reinhardt, géant de la musique. Toujours à la fin des années 70, Escoudé participe au Festival de Nice. L'occasion d'enregistrer avec le quintette de John Lewis, de jouer avec Stan Getz ou Bill Evans. Au cours de l'été 1980, John Mac Laughlin le convie à une tournée en duo qui le conduit aux États-Unis, au Brésil et au Japon.

Aujourd'hui, Christian Escoudé se produit aussi bien en duo, avec un guitariste classique, qu'en "trio glan", avec son fils, Eric, et le jeune Birell Lagrene, ou bien en quartette. Christian Escoudé, jazzman frenchy résolument moderne, aime retrouver ses racines. Garder le contact avec ses débuts en 1971 à Paris, époque où il faisait le bœuf dans les boîtes de la capitale française. Résultat: Escoudé mêle dans son programme des compositions originales et des standards signés Gershwin ou Cole Porter. Armé de ces arguments, Christian Escoudé part à la conquête du public Jordanien.

### A VOIR...

CINEMA - "Série noire pour nuits blanches" au CCF, Lundi 23 novembre à 20h00, "Le lieu du crime" (1986), d'André Téchiné, avec Catherine Deneuve et Victor Lanoux. Thomas, quatorze ans, vit dans un petit village perdu du sud-ouest de la France où il ne se passe pas grand chose. Ce jour là, tout va basculer...

EXPO - "Identités méditerranéennes" au CCF, jusqu'au 30 novembre. Fernand Braudel: "La méditerranée hétéroclite se présente dans nos souvenirs comme une image cohérente, comme un système où tout se mélange et se recompose en une unité originale".



Interview de Christopher Van Hollen

## 'L'approche équitable de Bill Clinton'

Après une carrière de 25 longues années au Département d'État américain, Christopher Van Hollen est devenu consultant en affaires internationales. Ce spécialiste du Moyen-Orient tente de décrypter le message de Clinton sur le processus de paix. Exégèse

LE JOURDAIN: Quel crédit devons-nous accorder aux propos électoralistes de Clinton. Notamment en ce qui concerne le processus de paix?

Christopher Van Hollen: Je pense que vous devez faire une distinction entre les propos tenus lors de la campagne électorale américaine, et les déclarations faites après l'élection... Nous pourrions noter quelques dissemblances et peut-être des changements. Depuis le 3 novembre dernier, le Président élu Bill Clinton a affirmé à deux reprises son soutien au processus de paix du Moyen-Orient.

Il espère que les pourparlers vont se poursuivre normalement, d'ici à sa prise de fonction le 20 janvier prochain... Je ne peux pas parler pour lui, mais je suis confiant. Je pense qu'il fera tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour que le processus de paix continue. La nouvelle Administration va mettre l'accent sur les questions intérieures, en particulier sur la faiblesse de l'économie américaine. Mais, je pense qu'elle va s'intéresser de très près au processus de paix et à la politique étrangère en général.

Clinton pourrait nommer une personne de très haut rang au poste de négociateur au Moyen-Orient. La vraie spéculation à l'heure actuelle est qu'il pourrait désigner l'ex-Président, Jimmy Carter, ou l'ex-chef du Département d'Etat, James Baker.

L.J: Considérez-vous le processus de paix comme un domaine réservé américain?

Christopher Van Hollen: Le rôle des U.S.A. est important, mais cela ne signifie pas que nous devons jouer un rôle exclusif. Ces jours derniers, Shimon Pérès a rencontré le Président égyptien Hosni Mubarak, le ministre des Affaires étrangères français, Roland Dumas était dans le Golfe... Je pense que la France ou d'autres, peuvent nous aider dans le processus de paix.

L.J: Les Français demandent un rôle plus actif pour les Na-



Christopher Van Hollen

tions Unies et pour l'O.L.P. Les Américains peuvent-ils accepter ces idées?

Christopher Van Hollen: Je pense que la nouvelle Administration Clinton sera intéressée par une solution multilatérale aux problèmes. Mais je ne suis pas sûr qu'elle va prévoir une implication significative de l'ONU dans le processus de paix...

Pur ailleurs, les discussions entre Hosni Mubarak et Shimon Pérès pourraient aider afin de ré-

Israéliens. L'Égypte est le seul pays arabe à entrettenir des relations diplomatiques avec Israël, et qui a de bonnes relations avec l'O.L.P.

L.J: Avec l'administration Clinton, le processus de paix va-t-il changer de visage?

Christopher Van Hollen: Je pense que cela va être la continuation du processus présent, qui est sur la voie depuis quinze mois. Je ne vois aucune raison

avec le Congrès. Cet homme doit avoir une connaissance particulière des affaires internationales. Troisièmement, celui-ci doit avoir pris conscience que nous sommes dans une ère internationale, qui suit la fin de la guerre froide et l'effondrement de l'Union soviétique...

L.J: Bill Clinton, sera-t-il un Président pro-Israélien?

Christopher Van Hollen: Je pense que Clinton aura une approche équitable dans la question israélo-arabe. Je pense qu'il va prendre en compte les positions israéliennes et arabes.

L.J: Autre priorité: Bill Clinton devrait s'attacher aux questions de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme...

Christopher Van Hollen: Il l'a mentionné au cours de sa campagne et cela va être un élément important de la politique américaine. C'est pourquoi les récents progrès dans le sens de la démocratie dans le royaume de Jordanie vont continuer à être reçus favorablement aux États-Unis... Ce mois-ci, le roi Hussein a proposé la création d'un centre pour étudier la démocratie et les droits de l'homme dans le monde arabe. Ce qui est important, c'est que cette initiative vient de sa Majesté elle-même. Cela n'a pas été soulevé par des groupes en faveur des droits de l'homme. L'idée vient du plus haut niveau...

L.J: Qu'en sera-t-il de l'Arabie Saoudite et des camps de détention en Israël? Dans un rapport, Amnesty International a récemment parlé de torture dans l'État hébreu...

Christopher Van Hollen: Amnesty International essaye d'implanter une branche régionale en Jordanie. Je pense que c'est un signe très positif. Pour ce qui concerne les violations des droits de l'homme dans d'autres pays de la région, j'espère que cela sera souligné par cet organisme. Que ce soit dans les territoires occupés ou ailleurs... Je pense qu'Israël doit répondre aux mêmes standards en matière de droits de l'homme que d'autres pays. Chaque année, le Département d'Etat américain soumet un rapport sur le sujet au Congrès...

L.J: Clinton va-t-il soutenir une nouvelle tournée de Baker au Moyen-Orient?

Christopher Van Hollen: Si M.Baker pense que c'est dans son intérêt d'entreprendre un voyage au Moyen-Orient, je pense que le nouveau Président élu l'approuvera. Cela dépend en fait de M.Baker. S'il pense que de réels progrès peuvent être faits, alors que l'Administration Bush vivra ses dernières heures. ■

Propos recueillis par Kate Daniels et Francis Mazoyer

LE JOURDAIN  
De Amina Chablain

## Allons enfants!

Le Congrès arabe pour la protection des enfants, qui s'est tenu cette semaine à Tunis, constitue une étape cruciale sur la voie de la promotion des générations futures. A cette occasion, les Nations Unies et la Ligue des États arabes ont été saisis de rapports peu rassurants, concernant les diverses conditions de vie de millions d'enfants.

Dans un monde arabe où le taux de croissance de la population atteint des degrés très élevés, il est plus que temps de se pencher sur les conditions socio-économiques de plus d'un tiers de la population. Il est souhaitable que ce Congrès ne se contente pas d'élaborer des recommandations, mais surtout, qu'il jette les jalons d'une législation renforçant les droits des enfants dans les foyers, dans la rue et dans les endroits publics.

Car de nos jours, il est inadmissible de voir des parents traîner des enfants en bas-âge dans des restaurants, fêtes, concerts, mariages et autres endroits qui présentent des conditions environnementales inadéquates.

Indépendamment de la position sociale des parents et de leur droit à "vivre" et à se divertir, l'enfant peut revendiquer son droit à un minimum de confort. Il relève de la mauvaise foi d'avancer l'argument de la pauvreté pour justifier toute négligence.

Chaque pays devra être jugé selon ses réalisations en matière de protection des droits de l'enfant. Les systèmes coercitifs devraient être dotés d'instruments coercitifs dans le but de faire respecter ces droits.

Le Congrès de Tunis n'aura réalisé ses objectifs que lorsqu'il aura atteint le comportement des parents. Défendre les enfants de l'Irak, de la Somalie et de la Palestine et répondre à leurs appels sera un cri dans le désert, tant que l'individu arabe ne sera pas conscient de la valeur intrinsèque de l'enfant et de ses droits. ■

Téléphone

Le Jourdain

648.298.652.380



## Would You Believe.....

There are now more than 1 million people ages 90 to 100 in the United States, according to the Census Bureau.

Women in Switzerland didn't win the right to vote until 1971.

Nearly 2.5 million elderly U.S. residents suffer from alcoholism, according to government estimates.

"The Star-Spangled Banner" did not become the U.S. national anthem until 1931, more than 115 years after it was written.

The U.S. government estimates that its residents spent about \$40 billion on illegal drugs in 1990.

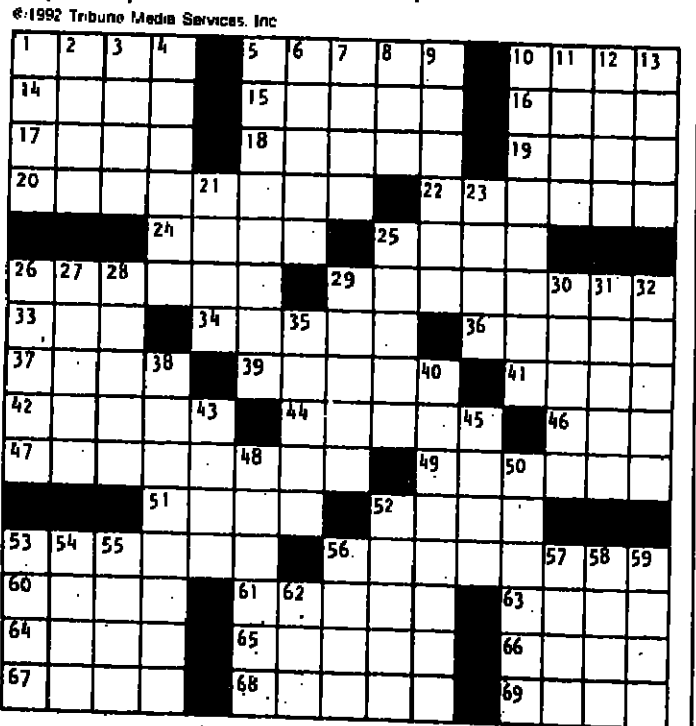
In some parts of the world, cow dung is considered to be a good medicine. However, it usually causes some kind of infection.

## Solution

ACROSS  
1 Rebuff  
5 Expensive fur  
10 Scream  
14 Lounge  
15 Entreaties  
16 Potpourri  
17 Vicinity  
18 Sublease  
19 Puts to work  
20 Candidate for fiancée  
22 Wear away by friction  
24 Shelter  
25 Uncertain attempt  
26 Agree  
29 Fairytale phrase  
34 Ewe cry  
36 Haute  
37 Unified  
39 Moths of Israel  
41 Walked  
42 Pester  
44 Supports politically

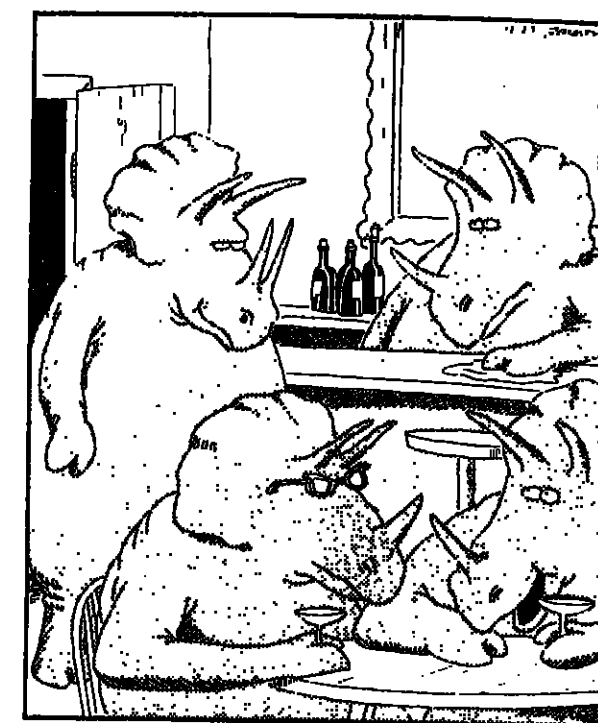
## ★ CROSSWORD PUZZLE ★

DOWN  
2 Ban Adhem  
3 Kiel, for one  
6 Fight with fancies  
64 Hardy girl  
65 Name  
66 First name in mysteries  
67 Otherwise  
68 Plant parts  
69 Harvest  
1 Portion of marble  
2 Traditional knowledge  
3 Fermented drinks  
4 River in Nebraska  
5 Ran fast  
6 Vigilant  
7 Ringer  
8 New Guinea  
9 Property  
10 "Put — foot forward"  
11 Noted illness  
12 Told fibs  
13 Fall  
21 Man  
23 Theda of the silents  
25 Bundle of grain  
26 Ease up  
27 Glutted  
28 Tempting spirit  
29 Meeting for two  
30 Most unlike the best  
31 — for news  
32 Jewish feast  
35 Worker's hope  
38 Quiet —  
40 Famous people  
43 Black wood  
45 Play part  
48 Puts into office  
50 Bed canopy  
52 Sacred song  
53 Palm fruit  
54 Genesis brother  
55 Mr. Hart of theater  
56 Before  
57 Fatigue  
58 Stewing pot  
59 Phase  
62 Islet



## THE FAR SIDE

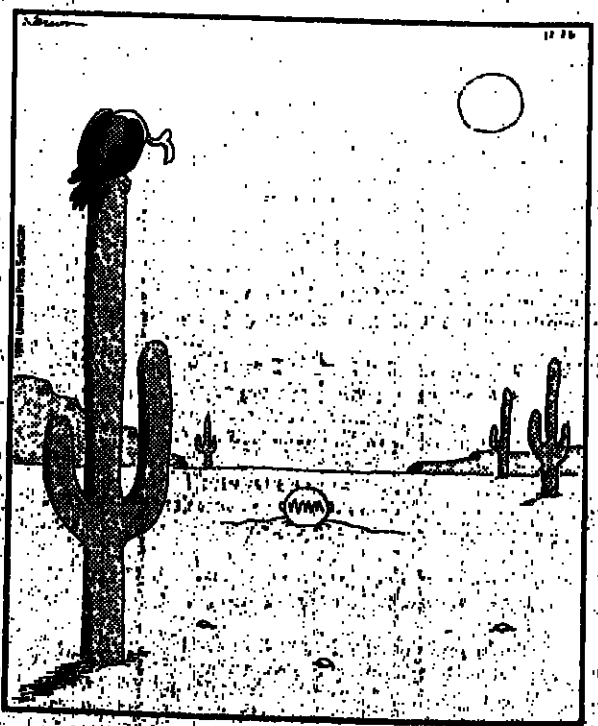
By GARY LARSON



"Ooooo! Check it out, Edith! It's a quadraceratops!"



"Egad! Willard's home early! Don't move — his vision's not very good, but his sense of smell and hearing are quite acute."



"Ooooo! Check it out, Edith! It's a quadraceratops!"

## Diplomatic Corps

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## Airlines

Alyonah (Air Yemen)	651691
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Alitalia	682140
American Airlines	649068
Arab Wings	894484
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Emirates Airlines	662141/678321
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Hungarian Airlines	639295
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Iraqi Airways	628596/628598
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## ADDITIONS

Folklore Museum: Jewelry and costumes over 100 years old. Also mosaics from Madaba and Jerash (4th to 18th centuries). The Roman Theatre, Amman. Opening hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. year round. Closed Tuesdays. Tel. 651760.

Jordan Archaeological Museum: Has an excellent collection of the antiquities of Jordan. Jabal Al-Qal'a (Citadel Hill). Opening hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed Tuesdays. Tel. 638795.

Jordan National Gallery: Contains a collection of paintings, ceramics, and sculptures by contemporary Islamic artists from most of the Muslim countries, and a collection of paintings by 19th century Orientalist artists. Muntazah, Jabal Weibdeh. Hours 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Closed Tuesdays. Tel. 630128.

## Churches

St. Joseph Church: (Roman Catholic) Jabal Amman. Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation: (Roman Catholic) Jabal Weibdeh. Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church: (Roman Catholic) Jabal Hussein. Tel. 661757.

Terrasanta Church: (Roman Catholic) Jabal Weibdeh, mass in Italian every Saturday at 5:30 p.m. Tel. 622366.

Church of the Annunciation: (Greek Orthodox) Abdali. Tel. 623541.

Church of the Redeemer: Jabal Amman. Tel. 625383.

Armenian Orthodox Church: Ashrafieh. Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church: (Syrian Orthodox) Ashrafieh. Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church: (Interdenominational) meets at Southern Baptist School in Shmeisani. Tel. 827981.

Church of the Good Shepherd: (Evangelical Lutheran) Um As-Summaq Tel. 81295.